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STROPKOV MEMORIAL BOOK

THE HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF STROPKOV
SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE COMMUNITY UNTIL
THE YEAR 1914, THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR I.

ARRANGED AND WRITTEN BY

ABRAHAM AVISH HAKHEIN WEINSTEIN
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1968

INTRODUCTION

STROPKOV IS THE NAME OF THE SHTETL WHERE
I WAS BORN AND WHERE I SPENT MY CHILDHOOD
DAYS. THERE WERE ABOUT 300 JEWISH FAMILIES
IN STROPKOV AND WITH THE HELP OF THE ALMIGHTY
AND THANKS TO THE LIBERAL AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT,
WITH FRANZ JOSEPH AS KING, JEWS ENJOYED A
PEACEFUL JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE FOR OVER
ONE HUNDRED YEARS. THEN CAME THE DESTRUCTIVE
SATAN, THE GERMANS, MAY THEIR NAME BE
OBLITERATED, WHO IN A BRUTAL WAY KILLED ALL
OF THE JEWS AND FOR US THE BELOVED
SHTETL OF STROPKOV DOES NOT EXIST ANYMORE.
BECAUSE THE MEMORIES OF MY YOUTH AND
OF MY BIRTHPLACE, THE SHTETL STROPKOV,
ARE DEAR TO ME AND ALSO ITS PEOPLE WHOM
I CANNOT FORGET, I HAVE ALWAYS WAITED
HOPING TO HEAR THAT SOMEONE HAS WRITTEN
A BOOK DESCRIBING THE LIFE THERE SO
THAT THE SACRED MEMORIES OF US SHALL
NOT BE FORGOTTEN. THIS WOULD ALSO SERVE
TO PERPETUATE OUR NAME FOR COMING
GENERATIONS SO THAT OUR BELOVED SHTETL
STROPKOV WILL BE COUNTED AMONG THE OTHER

JEWISH TOWNS AND SHTETLACH WHOSE FATE WAS SIMILAR. UNFORTUNATELY I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM ANYONE THAT SOMETHING WAS DONE ABOUT THIS. I HAVE THOUGHT, AS OUR SAGES HAVE TAUGHT US, "WHERE THERE AREN'T ANY MEN THEN YOU TRY TO BE ONE". THUS I HAVE TAKEN UPON MYSELF TO FULFILL THIS DUTY. I PRAY TO G-D THAT HE WILL HELP ME DO THE BEST BECAUSE MY STRENGTH IS LIMITED.

MY KNOWLEDGE OF ALL THAT HAS TRANSPIRED IN STROPKOV IN PAST YEARS I WAS ABLE TO GATHER AND ABSORB BECAUSE I WAS BROUGHT UP BY MY GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER REB YEHUDA AND TOIBE WEINSTEIN, MAY PEACE BE WITH THEM. IN THEIR HOUSE THE NEIGHBORS CONDUCTED SERVICES EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT, WELCOMING THE SHABBES, SHOLOSH SEUDOS (SABBATH AFTERNOON MEAL) AND ALSO MELAVE MALKÉ, A MEAL AT THE END OF THE SABBATH TO ACCOMPANY ITS DEPARTURE.

I HAVE HEARD MANY STORIES TOLD BY RIGHTEOUS JEWS, I HAVE ALSO HEARD OF MANY HAPPENINGS THAT TOOK PLACE IN STROPKOV DURING VARIOUS TIMES, ^{ALSO OF} CERTAIN THINGS WHICH THEY

LIVED THROUGH AND (THINGS THEY) HEARD ABOUT FROM OTHERS THAT HAPPENED IN STROPKOV AT VARIOUS TIMES IN BYGONE YEARS.

My LOVING AND DEAR BOBBE TOIBE, OF BLESSED MEMORY, ENJOYED TALKING TO ME AND TELLING STORIES OF PAST YEARS. SHE FELT THAT THE TIME IS NOT FAR OFF WHEN I WILL LEAVE HER. MY FATHER, HER ONLY SON, WAS NOT ABLE TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY SO HE LEFT FOR AMERICA THREE YEARS LATER MY MOTHER AND THE CHILDREN LEFT BUT I STAYED ON WITH MY BOBBE AND ZAIDE.

BEFORE MY MOTHER LEFT FOR AMERICA SHE ASKED THE SHINEVEL REBBE, REB YECHESKELE HALBERSHTAM, OF BLESSED MEMORY, IF SHE SHOULD ALSO TAKE ME TO AMERICA HE ADVISED HER TO LEAVE ME WITH MY ZAIDE AND BOBBE SO THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO STUDY. MY DEAR BOBBE TOOK IT UPON HERSELF TO WATCH OVER ME AND RAISE ME IN HER HOME. I KNOW HOW HARD THIS WAS FOR HER BUT SHE UNDERTOOK THIS AS A LABOR OF LOVE.

AFTER MY BAR MITZVAH SHE FELT THAT

IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO JOIN MY PARENTS. SHE SAT WITH ME, SPOKE TO ME AND ASKED OF ME NOT TO FORGET HER. ALL THAT SHE SAID TO ME REMAINED IN MY MEMORY.

I GOT THE MATERIAL OF THE VERY EARLY YEARS OF THE COMMUNITY OF STROPKOV FROM A BOOK ENTITLED "TOLDOT ISH HA-YOD" WHOSE AUTHOR WAS THE REVERED AND LEARNED RABBI ABRAHAM MEIR ISRAEL, MAY HE HAVE A LONG AND GOOD LIFE.

I HOPE THAT MY SHORT ACCOUNT WILL BE APPRECIATED BY THOSE WHO CAME FROM STROPKOV AND BY ALL TO WHOM THE NAME STROPKOV HAS MEANING.

TO MY DISTINGUISHED LANSLEIT

I WAS MOTIVATED TO WRITE ABOUT STROPKOV ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF A MITZVAH, WITHOUT ANY ULTERIOR MOTIVE. ONLY AFTER GREAT PHYSICAL EFFORT DID I SUCCEED IN WRITING AND MENTIONING THE TYPE OF JEW THAT CAME FROM STROPKOV, WHOSE GRANDFATHER AND GREAT GRANDFATHER LIVED THERE, SO THAT HE SHOULD KNOW HIS ROOTS AND THIS WILL SERVE AS HIS

HONORED CREDENTIALS.

HE WILL ALSO HAVE SOMETHING TO PASS ON TO HIS CHILDREN AFTER 120 YEARS SO THAT ^{THEY} SHOULD KNOW WHERE THEY ARE FROM AND ALSO KNOW THE FAMILY TREE OF THEIR PARENTS AND WHO THEY WERE. THERE WERE AMONG THEM REVERED AND DEAR JEWS WHO WERE KNOWN IN THE WORLD AS SONS LEARNED IN THE TORAH AND MEN OF GOOD DEEDS.

I HAVE ALSO SUCCEEDED THANK G-D THAT THERE SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK A LETTER FROM THE SHINEVER TZADIK, WRITTEN IN HIS OWN HAND SO THAT EVEN JEWS WHO DO NOT COME FROM STROPKOV, BUT WHO ARE CHASSIDIM, WILL ALSO ENJOY HAVING THE BOOK IN THEIR HOMES BECAUSE THE RABBIS OF STROPKOV WERE WORLD FAMOUS. TZADIKIM. AS FAR AS SHINEVER CHASSIDIM ARE CONCERNED, THEY WILL CERTAINLY VALUE AND CHERISH HAVING SUCH A TREASURE IN THEIR HOMES.

AFTER A FEW YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL WORK AND RESEARCH I FOUND THAT I AM BEING CONFRONTED WITH CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES

THAT WILL HAVE TO BE OVERCOME BEFORE PRINTING THIS BOOK. FIRST, I WANTED THE BOOK TO BE PRINTED ONLY BY RELIGIOUS JEWS. IN ADDITION TO THIS I DID NOT WANT TO PRINT MORE COPIES THAN THE DEMAND REQUIRED. I SOON FOUND THAT THE COST WOULD RUN INTO THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS.

I HOPE THAT YOU WILL NOT SUSPECT ME OF LOOKING TO PROFIT PERSONALLY FROM THIS VENTURE BECAUSE THERE ARE ALSO ADDITIONAL EXPENSES INVOLVED OTHER THAN THE COST OF PRINTING.

THIS TYPE OF WORK IS USUALLY UNDERTAKEN BY VARIOUS GROUPS OR SOCIETIES. WHILE I HAVE TAKEN THIS UPON MYSELF I DO EXPECT THAT AMONG OUR LANDSLEIT THERE WILL BE SOME WHO WILL FEEL THAT IT IS ALSO THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP BY CONTRIBUTING TO THIS PROJECT.

AVRAHAM AVISH WEINSTEIN

STROPKOV MEMORIAL BOOK THE HISTORY OF STROPKOV

STROPKOV WAS A SMALL TOWN IN THE COUNTY OF ZEMPLEIN, IN OLD HUNGARY AFTER WORLD WAR I IT WAS ANNEXED TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

THE GENERAL JEWISH POPULATION IN THOSE DAYS WAS APPROXIMATELY THAT OF THREE HUNDRED FAMILIES BUT THE NAME STROPKOV WAS KNOWN THROUGHOUT A LARGE PART OF AUSTRIA AS WELL AS IN HUNGARY BECAUSE OF ITS FAMOUS RABBIS, SCHOLARS AND TSADIKKIM. STROPKOV WAS ALSO FAMOUS BECAUSE OF ITS RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY WHICH CONSISTED OF HONEST AND LEARNED PEOPLE AND MEN OF GOOD DEEDS

GEOGRAPHICALLY THE TOWN WAS LOCATED ABOUT FOUR MILES FROM THE BORDER TOWN MEZILOV RITZ WHICH WAS ALREADY ON THE HUNGARIAN SIDE. IN THOSE DAYS THIS WAS THE END OF THE LINE FOR TRAINS FROM AUSTRIA AS WELL AS THE LAST STOP FOR TRAINS FROM HUNGARY. THE PASSENGERS WHO WANTED TO CONTINUE ON WITH THEIR JOURNEY FROM AUSTRIA TO HUNGARY HAD TO TRANSFER FROM THE

AUSTRIAN TRAIN TO THE HUNGARIAN TRAIN
ALSO, THOSE WHO WANTED TO CONTINUE ON WITH
THEIR JOURNEY FROM HUNGARY TO AUSTRIA
HAD TO TRANSFER TO THE AUSTRIAN TRAIN.

IN THOSE DAYS, STROPKOV WAS THE SECOND
CITY IN HUNGARY IN THAT AREA.

THE DATE OF THE FOUNDING OF THE JEWISH
COMMUNITY OF STROPKOV IS UNKNOWN BECAUSE
THE ARCHIVES OF THE COMMUNITY WERE DESTROYED.
THIS HAPPENED AROUND ~~AROUND~~ THE YEAR 1905.
UNTIL THAT YEAR, JEWS AS WELL AS NON-JEWS
WHO DID NOT WANT THEIR SONS TO SERVE IN THE
ARMY WOULD GO TO SEE DR. GREENFELD WHO
KEPT RECORDS OF VITAL STATISTICS SUCH AS
DATES OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS. HE WOULD
MAKE THE NECESSARY CHANGES SO THAT THE
YOUNG MEN WOULD AVOID SERVING IN THE ARMY.
THIS WENT ON FOR MANY YEARS UNTIL AROUND
1904 WHEN SOMEONE INFORMED THE AUTHORITIES
WHEN A COMMITTEE CAME TO INVESTIGATE THE
MATTER THEY FOUND THAT ALL THE RECORDS
HAD BEEN DESTROYED. THE JEWISH COMMUNITY
LIVED IN FEAR BUT WITH THE HELP OF THE

ALMIGHTY AND MUCH EFFORT THE COMMUNITY
EMERGED ABSOLVED.

THE OLD TOMBSTONES IN THE JEWISH CEMETARY
OF STROPKOV BEAR WITNESS TO THE FACT THAT
JEWS LIVED THERE SINCE ^{THE} 1600'S.

EXPULSION FROM STROPIKOV

IN THE YEAR 1740 THE WICKED QUEEN
MARIA THERESA OF AUSTRIA ISSUED AN
EDICT PROHIBITING JEWS FROM LIVING IN THE
CITY. THE JEWS WERE IN A JAD PREDICAMENT,
BUT AN ARRANGEMENT WAS WORKED OUT WHEREBY THE
GOVERNMENT WOULD ALLOW JEWS TO SETTLE IN
ANOTHER TOWN KNOWN AS TISENITZ.

TISENITZ WAS LOCATED IN AN AREA ABOUT
TWO VILLAGES BEHIND STROPIKOV. JEWS SETTLED
IN THIS SMALL VILLAGE AND CARRIED ON WITH THEIR
COMMUNAL LIFE UNTIL THE YEAR 1800, WHEN
PERMISSION WAS GRANTED TO THEM TO RETURN AND
LIVE IN THE CITY.

THE ENTIRE JEWISH COMMUNITY RESETTLED
THAT SAME YEAR IN THE CITY AND BUILT THEIR
FIRST SYNAGOGUE ON ONE OF THE WALLS OF THE
SYNAGOGUE THERE WAS A STONE MEMORIAL PLaque

WITH THE NAMES OF THE FOUNDERS ENGRAVED UPON IT; REB LEIB ROSENBERG, REB MENDEL NEIMAN AND REB AVRAHAM GERHART.

THE RABBIS OF STROPKOV

THE FIRST RABBI OF STROPKOV WAS RABBI MOSHE SCHEINFELD, OF SAINTED MEMORY. HIS NAME IS MENTIONED IN THE RESPONSA OF THE CHASAM SOFER. HE LEFT STROPKOV IN THE YEAR 1820 AND BECAME THE RABBI OF VERONOV. HE WAS WELL THOUGHT OF AND HIGHLY RESPECTED THERE (AS WELL). HE PASSED AWAY IN THE YEAR 1826.

THE SECOND RABBI WAS THE FAMOUS GAON AND TSADIK (SCHOLAR AND SAINT) RABBI YEKUSIEL YEHUDAH TEITLEBAUM, OF SAINTED MEMORY, THE SON OF THE DROVITSHER REBBE, RABBI ^{ELEZER} NISSAN OF SAINTED MEMORY THE SON OF THE BAAL YISMACH MOSHE OF SAINTED MEMORY. HE WAS ELECTED TO THIS POST ABOUT THE YEAR 1835.

RABBI YEKUSIEL YEHUDAH TEITLEBAUM, OF SAINTED MEMORY WAS FAMOUS AS A SCHOLAR AND PREACHER. HE WAS THE AUTHOR OF MANY BOOKS, AMONG THEM YITAV LEV, YITAV PANIM, RAV TOV AND THE

RESPONSA AVNEI TSEDEK. HIS PRESENCE IN STROPKOV ADDED DISTINCTION TO THE TOWN WHICH BECAME KNOWN FAR AND WIDE ALSO BECAUSE OF ITS INHABITANTS WHO WERE HONEST JEWS, WELL LEARNED AND PEOPLE OF GOOD DEEDS.

IN THE YEAR 1841 WHEN HIS GRANDFATHER THE GAON AND TSADIK RABBI MOSHE TEITLEBAUM THE CHELER RAV, THE BAAL YISMACH MOSHE OF SAINTED MEMORY PASSED AWAY, THE COMMUNITY OF CHELE INVITED HIS GRANDSON, THE RABBI OF STROPKOV TO FILL THE VACANT RABBINIC POST OF HIS FAMOUS GRANDFATHER IN THE CHASSIDIC KLOIZ (SYNAGOGUE). AFTER THE PASSING OF HIS FATHER THE DROBITSHER RAV, OF SAINTED MEMORY HE SERVED FOR A SHORT WHILE AS THE RABBI OF DROBITSH AND FROM ~~THERE~~ HE WAS INVITED TO COME TO SIGET, WHERE HE BECAME ^{WELL} A FAMOUS FOR HIS SCHOLARSHIP AND CHASSIDIC IMPACT. HE PASSED AWAY ON THE SIXTH DAY OF ELUL - (5643) 1883. MAY HIS GUIDING SPIRIT ALWAYS PROTECT US.

DURING THE PERIOD THAT STROPKOV WAS WITHOUT A RABBI THE CHASSIDIM WOULD TRAVEL TO TZANZ TO THE GREAT RABBI AND HOLY SCHOLAR RABBI CHAIM HALBERSHTAM OF SAINTED MEMORY,

THE BAAL DIVREI CHAIM. THEY REPORTED TO HIM THAT THE TOWN IS LOOKING FOR A RABBI. HE TOLD THEM THAT THE HEAVENS DECREED THAT THE RABBI OF TERTSAL SHOULD FILL THE POST OF RABBI OF STROPKOV. WHEN THE CHASSIDIM RETURNED THEY RELATED THIS TO THE LEADER OF THE COMMUNITY. HE DISCUSSED THIS WITH HIS ADVISORS AND IT WAS DECIDED BY THE COMMUNITY LEADERS TO ELECT THE RABBI OF TERTSAL AS RABBI OF STROPKOV. HIS NAME WAS RABBI CHAIM YOSEF GOTTLIED OF SAINTED MEMORY.

IT WAS TOLD THAT WHEN THE HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY AND HIS COMMITTEE CAME TO THE RABBI OF TERTSAL TO INVITE HIM TO BECOME THEIR RABBI, HE TOLD THEM THAT HE HAD ALREADY HEARD AND ACCEPTED THEIR INVITATION.

THE RABBI OF TERTSAL, THE GREAT GAON AND TSADDIK RABBI CHAIM YOSEF GOTTLIED OF SAINTED MEMORY WAS BORN IN 1790. HE WAS THE SON OF RABBI YEMDAH ARYEH, OF BLESSED MEMORY. HIS LINEAGE DATES BACK TO THE FAMOUS RABBINIC GENIUS OF THE CENTURY RABBI YOEL GOTTLIEB, OF SAINTED MEMORY, CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE RABBINICAL OF GALANTE. FROM HIS MOTHER'S SIDE HIS LINEAGE ORIGINATES FROM THE STOLIC OF THE HOLY SHAL-HA OF SAINTED MEMORY. HE WAS RAISED IN THE TOWN OF KROLE. HIS FATHER WAS WELL ENDOWED

AND QUITE WEALTHY AND LIKE ALL OTHER WEALTHY CHILDREN HE ATTENDED HIGH SCHOOL (GYMNASIUM). HE HAD PRIVATE TEACHERS WHO TAUGHT HIM HEBRAIC AS WELL AS SECULAR STUDIES. IT SO HAPPENED THAT AS A YOUNG MAN HE BECAME VERY ILL (LO ALEICHEM) IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO ANY OF YOU, THAT HIS LIFE WAS IN DANGER. HE VOWED TO HIS MAKER THAT IF HE RECOVERS HE WILL DEVOTE HIS LIFE TO THE STUDY OF TORAH. A MIRACLE HAPPENED AND HE GOT WELL. HE NEVER RETURNED TO HIS SECULAR STUDIES BUT STARTED AGAIN WITH HIS JEWISH STUDIES WITH GREAT FERVOR. HE WAS TUTORED BY THE FINEST TEACHERS AVAILABLE AND ALL ADMIRER HIS CLEAR THINKING ABILITY. HIS NAME BECAME KNOWN AMONG THE SCHOLARS AND SAINTS. HE BECAME A FAVORED FRIEND OF THE RAV OF PRESSBURG, THE BAAL CHASSAM SOFER, OF SAINTED MEMORY, THE TSANZER REBBE, THE BAAL DIVREI CHAIM, OF SAINTED MEMORY, AND ALSO OF THE TSADDIK RABBI MENDELE RIMONOVER, OF SAINTED MEMORY. THERE WERE ALSO OTHER TSADDIKIM OF HIS GENERATION WHO RESPECTED HIM AND IN WHOSE EYES HE FOUND GREAT FAVOR.

WHEN THE RABBI CHAIM YOSEF GOTTLIEB CAME TO STROPKOV THE JEWS KNEW WELL WHOM THEY HAVE AS A RABBI. THEY RESPECTED AND HONORED HIM GREATLY. HE WAS INCIDENTALLY AN ELEGANT AND IMPOSING PERSONALITY WHOM YOU COULD NOT HELP BUT ADMIRE.

HE PLEASED ALL CLASSES OF JEWS, BOTH THE CHASSIDIC ELEMENT AS WELL AS OTHER CONGREGANTS OF THE SYNAGOGUE, THOUGH THEY FOLLOWED THE ASHKENAZIC FORM OF WORSHIP. EVERY ONE ENJOYED LISTENING TO HIS SPIRITUAL ^{SERMONS AND} LECTURES. ALL DURING THE MANY YEARS THAT HE WAS THE RABBI OF STROPKOV AND MANY YEARS AFTERWARDS AS WELL, PEOPLE WOULD RELATE STORIES ABOUT HIS WARMTH, KINDNESS AND GOOD DEEDS.

AS YOU CAN SEE MANY RABBIS WERE GOOD FRIENDS OF HIS AND WHENEVER HE WOULD TRAVEL TO VISIT THEM THEY SHOWED HIM MUCH RESPECT. THE TSANZER REBBE, OF SAINTED MEMORY ONCE CAME TO VISIT HIM AND HE WAS OVERWHELMED BY HIS VAST LIBRARY. HE ASKED HIM, "TELL ME STROPKOVER RAV, WITH SO MUCH POVERTY HERE HOW COULD YOU ALLOW YOURSELF THE LUXURY OF SUCH AN EXTENSIVE LIBRARY?" THE RABBI ANSWERED, "YOU SEE, WHENEVER AN ITINERANT SCHOLAR COMES TO SEE ME REGARDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, I ALWAYS BUY ONE OF HIS BOOKS WITH MY OWN MONEY."

IN THE YEAR 1867 ON FRIDAY PRIOR TO THE SABBATH OF THE BLESSING OF THE MONTH OF ADAR, THE RABBI OF STROPKOV ACCOMPANIED BY ^{OF HIS} ~~HIS~~ THREE SONS VISITED THE TOWN OF TSANZ. HE WENT TO MEET THE FAMOUS DIVREI CHAIM OF SAINTED MEMORY. THE RABBI ASKED HIM

TO BE SEATED OPPOSITE HIM. BOTH OF ^{THEM} STARTED TO SMOKE, ONE HIS PIPE AND THE OTHER A CIGAR. THEY SAT AND TALKED FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS. WHEN THE TSADIK OF TSANZ GOT UP, STRETCHING OUT HIS HAND SAYING, "A GUTEN SHABGES, RABBI OF STROPKOV", RABBI CHAIM YOSEF ANSWERED HIM, "A GUTEN SHABGES TSANZER REBBE AND IN SUCH A MANNER THE TWO TSADIKIM PARTED.

AFTER SHABGES HE RETURNED HOME QUITE PLEASED SAYING TO HIS SONS, "AT NO TIME HAVE I HAD SUCH A PLEASANT CONVERSATION WITH THE TSANER REBBE AS I DID THIS TIME. AFTER THE RABBIS RETURN HOME, HE TOOK SICK AND ON THE HOLY SABBATH, THE FOURTH DAY IN THE MONTH OF AV, 1867 THE BELOVED RABBI CHAIM YOSEF GOTTLIEB, THE STROPKOVER RAV, OF SAINTED MEMORY PASSED AWAY.

THE FUNERAL WAS ATTENDED BY JEWS FROM HUNGARY AND AUSTRIA AND ALL OF THE JEWS FROM STROPKOV WERE AT THE CEMETARY IN TISENITZ AND MOURNED THE PASSING OF THEIR BELOVED RAV OF SAINTED MEMORY.

RABBI CHAIM YOSEF WAS SURVIVED BY FIVE SONS. THEIR NAMES WERE, REB EFRAIM, OF BLESSED MEMORY, REB MENASHE, OF BLESSED MEMORY, REB NAFTALI, OF BLESSED MEMORY, REB YISROEL MENACHEM, OF BLESSED MEMORY AND REB ASHER, OF BLESSED MEMORY AND ONE DAUGHTER MIRIAM GITTEL, OF BLESSED MEMORY. THEY WERE ALL TALENTED AND GREAT SCHOLARS. THEY CONDUCTED THEMSELVES IN FINE

CHASSIDIC TRADITION. THE YOUNGEST THREE MARRIED IN HUNGARY AND GALICIA AND THE TWO OLDEST MARRIED AND LIVED IN STROPKOV. REB EFRAIM HAD TWO SONS, REB GETZIL AND REB LEIBISH. REB GETZIL WAS A FINE UPRIGHT PERSON AND HAD A NICE FAMILY, THREE SONS AND ONE DAUGHTER. HE ALSO HAD A FINE INCOME. HE WAS THE OWNER OF A FACTORY THAT MANUFACTURED CARBONATED WATER (SODA) THE ONLY ONE IN TOWN. BUT HIS BROTHER LEIBISH HAD A ROUGH TIME SUPPORTING HIS FAMILY. HE WAS A LOVELY PERSON AND A FINE SCHOLAR. THE RABBI'S DAUGHTER MIRIAM GITTEL WAS MARRIED IN ZIBENBURGEN. HER HUSBAND WAS AN ERUDITE SCHOLAR AND EXCELLENT TEACHER.

THE RABBI'S SON REB MENASHE LIVED IN STROPKOV. HE HAD A SON NAMED REB HERSH GOTTLIEB. HE WAS A NEIGHBOR OF MY GRANDFATHER REB YEHUDAH WEINSTEIN. REB HERSH WAS A RESPECTED PERSONALITY WITH A RABBINIC APPEARANCE. THE NEIGHBORS WOULD CONDUCT SERVICES IN HIS HOME EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT, SHABBS AFTERNOON, SHALOSH SE'UDOS AND AT NIGHT MELAVE MALKE.

REB HERSH GOTTLIEB, AS FAR AS I KNOW HAD TWO BEAUTIFUL AND TALENTED DAUGHTERS. THE OLDEST WAS MARRIED DURING REB HERSH'S LIFETIME. HE PASSED AWAY SHORTLY AFTERWARDS AND LEFT AN UNMARRIED YOUNGER DAUGHTER BY THE NAME OF RUCHAME.

MY GRANDFATHER, REB YEHUDAH WEINSTEIN, OF BLESSED MEMORY, HAVING BEEN A DEVOTED FRIEND OF REB HERSH GOTTLIEB, WOULD

ALWAYS CONSULT HIM BEFORE DOING ANYTHING, LIKEWISE REMAINED DEVOTED TO THE WIDOW, THE SAINTED MALKE GOTTLIEB. SHE ALSO CONSULTED HIM WHENEVER THE NEED AROSE AND HE WOULD GO OUT OF HIS WAY TO HELP HER.

SOMETIME LATER WHEN REB ZALMAN YOSEF, THE FATHER-IN-LAW OF THE DAYAN (RABBINICAL JUDGE) BECAME A WIDOWER, A SHIDDUCH (MATCH) WAS ARRANGED AND THEY WERE MARRIED. THEY WERE QUITE HAPPY TOGETHER AND REB ZALMAN YOSEF BECAME ONE OF MY GRANDFATHER'S GOOD FRIENDS. THE MINYAN OF NEIGHBORS WHO USED TO GATHER AT THE HOME OF REB HERSH GOTTLIEB NOW MET AT MY GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE.

(FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE LIFE OF REB CHAIM YOSEF GOTTLIEB, OF SAINTED MEMORY, PLEASE REFER TO THE BOOK ENTITLED "TOLDOS ISH HA'YOD" WRITTEN BY RABBI AVRAHAM MEIR IZRAEL, MAY HE HAVE A LONG AND GOOD LIFE.

THE REBBE REB WOLF - OF SAINTED MEMORY

~~THE REBBE REB WOLF, OF SAINTED MEMORY~~

IN THOSE DAYS POVERTY WAS WIDESPREAD IN THE TOWNS OF GALICIA. POOR MEN, AND WOMEN AND CHILDREN WOULD COME TO BEG AND THIS WAS A DAILY OCCURANCE. EVERY HOUSEHOLD WAS PREPARED FOR THIS AND WAS SURE TO HAVE PLENTY OF SMALL COINS ON HAND TO DISTRIBUTE TO THOSE IN NEED. THESE BEGGARS WOULD USUALLY LEAVE THE SAME DAY.

EXCEPT FOR THOSE WHO CAME LATE AND REMAINED OVERNIGHT. ONCE A BEGGAR CAME, SLEPT OVER IN THE BEIS MEDRISH AND STAYED ON. HE SPENT HIS DAY PRAYING AND STUDYING AND IN THE EVENING HE WOULD GO OUT BEGGING FOR A MEAL. HE CARRIED ON IN THIS MANNER FOR SOME TIME. HE CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF MANY PEOPLE BECAUSE OF HIS EXTREME PIETY AND CONSTANT STUDYING. HE DID NOT ENTER INTO ANY CONVERSATION BUT SAT AND STUDIED.

HE SEEMED TO BE A PLEASANT AND LIKEABLE PERSON AND WAS NEVER TURNED DOWN FOOD BY ANYONE. HE CERTAINLY NEVER WENT HUNGRY. HE FINALLY BECAME THE SON-IN-LAW OF A MAN NAMED WEINBERGER. HE SAT AND STUDIED AFTER HE MARRIED AS WELL AND HIS IN-LAWS CONTINUED TO SUPPORT THE YOUNG COUPLE WHO WERE A SOURCE OF MUCH PLEASURE TO THEM.

WHEN THE FATHER-IN-LAW PASSED AWAY, THE NEIGHBORS, ESPECIALLY THE WOMEN, SOON NOTICED THAT THE SITUATION WAS NOT TOO GOOD. THEY TOOK IT UPON THEMSELVES TO SEE TO IT THAT THE COUPLE WILL BE LOOKED AFTER AS NEITHER THE RABBI NOR HIS WIFE HAD ANY OTHER MEANS OF SUPPORT. THESE WOMEN OF STRUPKOV, WHO WERE REALLY SAINTLY SOULS RESPECTED THIS LEARNED RABBI AND CONSIDERED IT A GREAT MITZVAH TO SUPPORT HIM. THEY LOOKED AFTER ALL OF THE COUPLES NEEDS AND WOULD ALWAYS ADDRESS HIM WITH THE TITLE REBBE. IN TIMES OF STRESS THEY WOULD CONSULT HIM AND ASK HIM TO PRAY FOR THEM.

IN TIME EVERYONE CALLED HIM REBBE REB WOLF, OF SAINTED MEMORY.

THE REBBE HAD A SON, AND I ^{ALSO} REMEMBER A GRANDSON OF HIS WHO WAS CALLED REB WOLF YEKILS. HE WAS A QUIET UNASSUMING PERSON AND A VERY HONEST JEW. HIS WIFE WAS TRULY A WOMEN OF VALOR AND A VERY CONSCIENTIOUS PERSON WHO ALSO HELPED SUPPORT THE FAMILY. THEY ALSO HAD FINE TALENTED SONS.

THE REBBE REB WOLF AND THE RAV, REB CHAIM YOSEF RESPECTED EACH OTHER AND THERE WAS A GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM BECAUSE THE REBBE DID NOT MIX INTO COMMUNAL MATTERS AND RARELY EXPRESSED HIMSELF REGARDING WORDLY MATTERS. BUT IN THE YEARS AROUND 1840 WHEN THE HUNGARIANS ROSE UP AGAINST THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT IN AN EFFORT TO FREE HERSELF FROM HER REIGN AND BE INDEPENDANT. THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT ASKED RUSSIA TO HELP HER BY SENDING RUSSIAN TROOPS TO HUNGARY AND SUBDUE THE HUNGARIAN HERO KAVSCHUTLAYISH. AT THAT TIME ALL THE JEWS BECAME VERY MUCH INTERESTED AS THEY WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WOULD BE BEST FOR THEM. THE RABBI REB CHAIM YOSEF FELT THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE RUSSIAN TROOPS WOULD COME AND THE AUSTRIANS WOULD CONTINUE TO GOVERN THE HUNGARIANS. THE REBBE REB WOLF WAS OF THE OPINION THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE HUNGARIANS WOULD WIN AND BE INDEPENDANT AND THAT THE

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RUSSIANS SHOULD NOT COME TO HELP THE AUSTRIANS. IT HAS BEEN TOLD THAT ON EREV PESACH DURING THE BAKING OF THE SHMURE MATZO, JUST AS THE MATZO WAS BEING PUT INTO THE OVEN, THE RAV ANNOUNCED THAT THE RUSSIANS SHOULD COME IN. WHEN THE MATZO WAS DONE AND BEING TAKEN OUT OF THE OVEN, THE REBBE ANNOUNCED THAT THE RUSSIANS SHOULD STAY OUT.

THANK G-D THIS DID NOT LEAD TO A REAL CLASH AND THEY CONTINUED TO BE GOOD FRIENDS. AT THE END, THE RUSSIANS DID COME AND ~~WON~~ WERE VICTORIOUS OVER THE HUNGARIANS. A COMPROMISE WAS REACHED BETWEEN THE AUSTRIANS AND HUNGARIANS AND THEY GOT ALONG WITH EACH OTHER. THIS HAPPENED IN THE YEAR 1845 AND JEWS LIVED IN PEACE FOR APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY FIVE YEARS UNDER THE AUSTRIAN KAISER, FRANZ YOSEF.

THE DAYAN RABBI MORDECHAI YITSCHAK SAMET OF SAINTED MEMORY

IN THOSE DAYS THERE WAS A DAYAN IN STROPKOV BY THE NAME OF REB MORDECHAI YITSCHAK SAMET. HE WAS A GREAT SCHOLAR AND A VERY ^{PLEASANT} ~~PLEASANT~~ AND SYMPATHETIC TYPE OF PERSON. EVERY ONE HAD GREAT RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR HIM BECAUSE OF HIS SINCERITY. WHENEVER ONE SPOKE TO HIM YOU WERE SURE OF HIS UNDIVIDED ATTENTION. HE SHOWED THIS BY THE SMILE AND WARM EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE.

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THE OLDER PEOPLE ALSO ENJOYED HIM BECAUSE HE ALWAYS HAD SOMETHING INTERESTING TO TELL THEM. BECAUSE OF THESE LOVELY QUALITIES HE WAS BELOVED BY ALL CLASSES OF JEWS IN TOWN.

HE BECAME A WIDOWER LATE IN LIFE AND MARRIED MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER YEHUDIT OF RIMANOV. WHEN SHE CAME TO STROPKOV SHE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HER TWO SONS, MOSHE AND YUDEL. SHE WAS TRULY A SAINTED SOUL. SHE SPENT HER TIME VISITING THE POOR AND THE SICK. WHENEVER SHE HEARD OF A SICK PERSON WHO DID NOT HAVE THE PROPER NOURISHING FOOD, SHE WOULD SUPPLY IT. IN TIME EVERYONE CALLED HER BOBBE YEHUDIT. HER YOUNGEST SON WAS CALLED YUDEL DIE BOBBENS AND THIS NAME REMAINED WITH HIM TO HIS LATER YEARS. AND HE WAS THE ONE WHO WAS MY ZAIDE, REB YUDEL DIE BOBBENS.

AFTER THE DAYAN REB MORDECHAI YITSCHAK SAMET OF SACRED MEMORY PASSED AWAY HE WAS SUCCEEDED BY RABBI SHLOMO BORUCH TANNENBAUM, OF SACRED MEMORY, THE DAYAN OF STROPKOV. ALSO HE WAS A GREAT SCHOLAR, PERPETUAL STUDENT ALWAYS STEEPED IN HIS STUDIES. HE WAS ALSO A MAN OF FEW WORDS NEVER GETTING INVOLVED IN WORDLY OR POLITICAL ISSUES. HIS ONLY INTEREST WAS STUDYING.

FROM WHAT I HAVE BEEN TOLD BY RABBI ISRAEL, THE TSADDIK RABBI CHAIM HALBESHTAM, OF SACRED MEMORY, OF TSAN'Z HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR RABBI SHLOMO BORUCH AND WANTED VERY

FOR HIS GRANDCHILDREN TO STUDY WITH HIM

THE SHINEVER TSADDIK WOULD LIKEWISE ADVISE MANY WHO CAME TO HIM FOR ADVICE THAT THEY SHOULD CONSULT WITH RABBI SHLOMO BORUCH BECAUSE IT WOULD BE TO THEIR ADVANTAGE. RABBI SHLOMO BORUCH WAS A STUDENT OF RABBI YOSEF CHARIF OF ZBOROV AND A RUBSCHITZER CHASSID. HE PASSED AWAY AROUND THE YEAR 1880, MAY HIS MEMORY ALWAYS BE BLESSED.

DURING THE PERIOD THAT RABBI SHLOMO BORUCH WAS THE DAYAN, SOMEWHERE AROUND THE YEAR 1848, BOTH THE RAV RABBI CHAIM YOSEF OF SACRED MEMORY AND THE REBBE RABBI WOLF OF SACRED MEMORY WERE ALREADY GONE. THE JEWS OF STROPKOV SOMEHOW FELT THAT THERE WAS GREAT NEED FOR A RABBI TO BRING LIFE INTO THE TOWN.

DURING THOSE DAYS, REB HERSH FRIEDMAN WAS THE HEAD OF THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY. HE WAS VERY MUCH LIKED BY EVERYONE BECAUSE OF HIS FINE PERSONALITY, WISDOM AND SCHOLARSHIP. HE WAS ALSO QUITE WEALTHY AND EXTREMELY CHARITABLE, ^{ONE} WHO GAVE VERY FREELY. HE HAD AN ELEGANT HOME WHICH ONE MIGHT CALL REGAL AND WITH IT ALL HE WAS A GOOD PERSON AND HAD FINE CHILDREN. EVERYONE WAS ANXIOUS TO LEARN ABOUT HIS FEELINGS CONCERNING A RABBI AND HE FINALLY EXPRESSED THEM. HE TOLD THEM THE GOOD NEWS THAT THE SHINEVER TSADDIK IS INTERESTED ~~IN~~ IN

COMING TO STROPKOV TO BE THE RABBI.

THE JEWS OF STROPKOV DID NOT ^{HAVE ANY} DOUBTS ABOUT THIS BECAUSE THEY FELT THEY COULD PUT THEIR TRUST IN REB HERSH FRIEDMAN. SOON ENOUGH, THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED. THE GREAT GAON AND TSADDIK, RABBI YECHESKEL SCHARAG HALBERSHTAM OF SHINEVE CAME TOGETHER WITH HIS FAMILY AND TRUSTEES AND THEY WERE RECEIVED AMIDST FEELINGS OF RESPECT AND JOY.

STROPKOV A COSMOPOLITAN CITY

WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE SHINEVER REBBE IN STROPKOV THE APPEARANCE OF THE PLACE CHANGED CONSIDERABLY. IT CEASED TO BE THE SMALL SHTETTL OF STROPKOV AND LOOKED MORE LIKE A LARGER COSMOPOLITAN CITY. THE RABBI HAD MANY VISITORS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, OF VARIED APPEARANCES AND ALSO FROM ALL TYPES OF PLACES.

WEALTHY JEWS FROM POLAND CAME AND FROM THE WAY THEY DRESSED AND FROM THEIR GENERAL APPEARANCE YOU COULD EASILY TELL THAT THESE WERE SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS PEOPLE. THEY WERE TALL IN STATURE AND HEALTHY LOOKING. THE RABBIS WHO CAME WITH THEM WERE EQUALLY WELL DRESSED IN LONG SILK JACKETS AND HATS MADE OF EXPENSIVE FELTS. THE POLISH CHASSIDIM WORE FUR LINED COATS WINTER TIME AND THEIR RABBIS WERE DRESSED ELEGANTLY.

THE HUNGARIAN JEWS WERE OF SIMILAR APPEARANCE. THE RICH JEWS LOOKED LIKE LORDS, QUITE WELL DRESSED. THE HUNGARIAN RABBIS WORE FROCKS WITH WIDE GRIMMED SOFT FELT HATS AND SOME EVEN WORE TOP HATS.

AND WHAT A CONTRAST, WITH THE LOCAL CHASSIDIM WEARING WORN OUT COATS, ~~AND~~ MOSTLY TORN. AS FOR HATS, THEY WERE MOSTLY MADE OF BEAVER SKINS, SOME LOOKED FINE BUT OTHERS NOT SO ATTRACTIVE. ON SHABBS MORNING WHEN ALL OF THE JEWS CAME TO THE BEIS MEDRISH IT LOOKED LIKE THE RETURN OF THE EXILES. SEEING THIS SPECTACLE FOR THE FIRST TIME THE JEWS OF STROPKOV REALIZED THAT JEWS ARE SCATTERED AMONG THE VARIOUS NATIONS ALL OVER THE WORLD.

EVERY HOUSE IN STROPKOV A GUEST HOUSE

EVERYDAY JEWS WOULD COME AND LEAVE FOR HOME AFTER HAVING BEEN LUCKY ENOUGH TO MEET WITH THE REBBE AND GIVE HIM A KVITTEL (PERSONAL NOTE, USUALLY WITH A REQUEST. THE REBBE WOULD THEN GIVE HIS BLESSINGS AND THE CHASSID FEELING THAT HIS TRIP WAS A SUCCESS WAS READY TO RETURN HOME. MANY JEWS WERE NOT SO SUCCESSFUL AND HAD TO REMAIN OVERNIGHT. THUS EVERY JEWISH HOME WAS WILLING AND READY TO HOUSE AND FEED AS MANY AS THREE VISITORS. BY NATURE, CHASSIDIM ARE NOT SO PARTICULAR ABOUT COMFORTS AT A TIME SUCH AS THIS, THUS EACH HOUSE BECAME A GUEST HOUSE.

BUSINESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF STROPKOV WENT ON AS USUAL BUT ONE COULD SENSE A SPECIAL HOLY ATMOSPHERE IN THE VICINITY OF THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE REBBE'S HOME. JEWS, MEN AS WELL AS WOMEN HAD ONE PRAYER AND THAT WAS TO HAVE A PRIVATE AUDIENCE WITH THE REBBE AND RECEIVING HIS BLESSINGS BEFORE RETURNING HOME. ANY JEW WHO NEVER EXPERIENCED THIS PERSONALLY CANNOT APPRECIATE WHAT THIS WAS LIKE IN REALITY, REGARDLESS OF HOW WELL ONE WOULD DESCRIBE IT.

THE HUMMING ACTIVITY AROUND THE BES MEDRISH MORNING AND EVENING GAVE THE PEOPLE OF STROPKOV THE FEELING THAT THEY WERE ON TOP OF THE WORLD. THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS CONTINUED UNTIL AROUND THE YEAR 1882 WHEN THE REBBE DECIDED TO RETURN TO SHINEVE.

(TD - 29)

HARAV RABBI YITSCHAK HERSH AMSEL

IN STROPKOV THERE WAS A JEW BY THE NAME OF REB PERETS AMSEL WHO WAS A VERY HONEST, QUIET AND REFINED PERSON. HE WAS FAR FROM BEING A RICH MAN. HE WOULD TRAVEL IN THE SMALL VILLAGES PEDDLING HIS WARES AMONG THE GENTILES AND WOULD OFTEN SPEND THE NIGHT WITH MY GRANDFATHER REB LEIB SFER OF FLOTEH. REB PERETS HAD FOUR SONS, THE ELDEST WAS CALLED YITSCHAK HERSH. ALL WERE FINE BOYS AND HAD GOOD HEADS FOR LEARNING. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEIR BAR-MITZVAH THEY LEFT TO STUDY IN A YESHIVAH.

REB YITSCHAK HERSH WAS THE FIRST TO RETURN HOME AND THE PEOPLE COULDN'T GET OVER HIS HANDSOME APPEARANCE. ONE WOULD ONLY HAVE TO TALK TO HIM BRIEFLY TO DETECT HIS GREAT KNOWLEDGE OF THE TALMUD AND COMMENTARIES. HE RECEIVED HIS ORDINATION FROM THE HEADS OF THE YESHIVAH WHERE HE STUDIED AS WELL AS THE GAONIM OF HUNGARY. HE WAS A TALENTED AND BRILLIANT SPEAKER WHO EVERYONE ENJOYED LISTENING TO. HIS BROTHERS WERE ALSO LEARNED PEOPLE WHO WERE

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ORDAINED BY THE LEADING RABBIS OF HUNGARY, ^{THEY WERE ALSO} (AS WELL AS) MEN OF GREAT LEARNING AND INTELLECT.

REB YITSCHAK HERSH MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF REB ZALMON YOSEF WEINBERGER A MOST RESPECTED AND WEALTHY MAN CITIZEN. HE PROMISED REB YITSCHAK HERSH COMPLETE SUPPORT SO THAT HE COULD CONTINUE TO STUDY WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT MAKING A LIVING. THIS PLEASED REB YITSCHAK HERSH BECAUSE STUDYING MEANT SO MUCH TO HIM. AFTER HIS MARRIAGE HE DEVOTED ALL OF HIS TIME TO STUDY AND DELVED DEEPER INTO THE LEARNING OF TORAH. TIME PASSED ON AND BEFORE LONG HE BECAME THE FATHER OF A DAUGHTER. AND LATER ON A SON WAS ADDED TO THE FAMILY AND ITS NEEDS GREW AS WELL.

REB YITSCHAK HERSH DECIDED THAT NOW WAS THE TIME TO TELL HIS FATHER-IN-LAW THAT HE WANTED TO ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SUPPORT OF HIS FAMILY. HE WAS NOW READY TO ACCEPT A RABBINIC POST WHEREVER AVAILABLE AND THIS WOULD REALLY MAKE HIM HAPPY.

REB ZALMON YOSEF WEINBERGER WHO WAS ONE OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERS DISCUSSED THIS WITH THE HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY AND IT WAS AGREED THAT REB YITSCHAK HERSH SHOULD BECOME THE DAYAN (JUDGE OF THE RABBINICAL COURT) OF STROPKOV. THIS NEWS WAS GREETED WITH MUCH ^{ENTHUSIASM} (HAPPINESS) BECAUSE REB YITSCHAK HERSH WAS BELIEVED AND RESPECTED BY ALL. SINCE THE SHINEVEL REBBE REB YECHSKELLE LEFT STROPKOV, THE MOOD IN TOWN WAS A SAD ONE BUT WITH THE NEW REPLACEMENT THE MOOD WAS UPLIFTED AND PEOPLE WERE HAPPIER.

EVEN THE DAYAN REB SHLOIME BORUCH AGREED WITH MUCH SATISFACTION BECAUSE OF HIS HIGH OPINION OF REB YITSCHAK HERSH AS A MOST DESERVING REPLACEMENT. REB YITSCHAK HERSH'S BROTHER REB MOISHE BECAME THE SHACHET OF THEL, REB ELIEZER BECAME THE RABBI OF A TOWN IN HUNGARY AND THE YOUNGER BROTHER REB LIPPE, ALSO A BRIGHT SCHOLAR DIED AT A YOUNG AGE.

WITH THE PASSING OF TIME THE BELOVED DAYAN REB SHLOIME BORUCH OF BLESSED MEMORY

PASSED AWAY AT A RIFE AGE SO REB HERSHELE WAS CHOSEN AS AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE. HE WAS THE SON-IN-LAW OF REB YUDEK FRIEDMAN. HE SAT AND STUDIED ALL OF THE TIME BECAUSE HIS FATHER-IN-LAW PROMISED TO SUPPORT HIM. REB HERSHELE WAS A FINE SCHOLAR WHO WAS ORDAINED BY THE GREAT GAONIM AND HE WAS TRULY WORTHY AND DESERVING OF THE RESPECT GIVEN HIM AS A DAYAN.

AS A THIRD DAYAN TO HEARINGS IN THE RABBINICAL COURT REB YITSCHAK HERSH WOULD INVITE THE ERUDITE SCHOLAR REB. MOISHE SHEINFELD. HE EARNED HIS LIVING AS A MELAMED (TEACHER) OF YOUNG MEN BUT HE WAS REALLY WORTHY OF BEING A DAYAN OR A RABBI. HE WAS A MAN OF MANY TALENTS AND REB YITSCHAK HERSH WOULD SPEND MUCH TIME WITH HIM STUDYING.

A QUESTION AROSE, WHY DOES THE TOWN OF STROPKOV NEED THREE DAYANIM? THE ANSWER GIVEN WAS THAT THERE DEVELOPED IN STROPKOV A LUCRATIVE BUSINESS OF BUILDING MATERIALS AS WELL AS SUCCESSFUL CONTRACTORS WITH MANY PARTNERSHIPS. WHEN IT CAME TO SHARING

THE PROFITS THERE WERE ALWAYS DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AND MISUNDERSTANDING AND ONLY THE RABBINICAL COURT COULD (DECIDE) HAND DOWN THE DECISION. THE JEWS INVOLVED WERE REB YEHUDAH HERSH WEINBERGER, HIS BROTHER-~~IN-LAW~~ REB BERISH WEINBERGER, REB MOISHE LORBER, REB YITSCHAK REICH AND OTHERS. THEY WERE ALL BRIGHT, MENECH CHASSIDIC JEWS BUT EACH ONE CONSIDERED HIMSELF BRIGHTER THAN THE OTHERS. ESPECIALLY REB BERISH WEINBERGER, A TORAH SCHOLAR WHO WOULD ARGUE WITH THE COURT THAT ACCORDING TO THE LAW HE IS ENTITLED TO THE LARGEST SHARE OF THE PROFITS. THE BETH DIN HAD TO CONVINCE HIM THAT HE IS NOT ENTIRELY CORRECT IN HIS DEMANDS. THESE COURT SESSIONS WOULD VERY OFTEN WEAR OUT THE JUDGES.

GENERAL CONDITIONS IN STROPKOV AROUND THE YEAR

1880 WERE QUIET. BUSINESS WISE EVERY ONE CARRIED ON WITH HIS DAILY WORK AND AS TO COMMUNAL MATTERS THE MOOD AMONG THE JEWS WAS ONE OF SATISFACTION. REB YITSCHAK HERSH, THOUGH HE WAS OFFICIALLY THE DAYAN WAS RECOGNIZED AS THE RABBI AS WELL. HE WOULD OFTEN GIVE SERMONS AND LECTURE ON PROFOUND SUBJECT, IN BOTH SYNAGOGUES WHERE HE ATTENDED SERVICES ON THE SABBATH. THE AUDIENCES ENJOYED HIM VERY MUCH AND THE ATMOSPHERE WAS A PLEASING ONE. THE HEAD OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ANNOUNCED THOUGH THAT WELL KNOWN RABBIS LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THEY WERE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE RABBINICAL POST IN STROPKOV. ONE OF THE RABBIS WAS THE RAV OF ZBOROV, HARAV MOSHE YOSEF TEITELBAUM WHO WAS KNOWN BY THE JEWS OF STROPKOV. HE ENJOYED THE REPUTATION AS A GREAT SCHOLAR AND ONE ABUNDING IN PIETY. IT WAS FELT THAT HE WOULD BRING GREAT HONOR TO THE COMMUNITY WERE HE TO BECOME ITS RABBI. A GENERAL MEETING WAS CALLED AND IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE REVERED GADN AND TSADDIK RABBI MOSHE YOSEF TEITELBAUM SHOULD ^{BE} CHOSEN AS THE RAV OF STROPKOV. THE HEAD OF THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY TOGETHER WITH A FEW TRUSTEES AND THEY, ~~SENT~~ WERE THE ENVOYS DISPATCHED TO THE RABBI, WHO IN A VERY WARM FASHION ^{NOTIFIED HIM} OF THE DECISION OF STROPKOV. IN RETURN

THE RABBI THANKED THEM PROFUSELY IN WARM FASHION AND
 ADDED FITTING BLESSINGS TO ALL THE JEWS OF STROPKOV.
 THE DAY THE RABBI ARRIVED A HUGE CROWD WELCOMED HIM
 WITH SONG AS THEY ENTERED THE BEIS HAMEDRISH. ALL
 THOSE PRESENT WERE IN EXTREMELY HIGH SPIRITS.
 THE JEWS EXCHANGED BLESSING AS BEFITS SUCH A
 GLORIOUS OCCASION.

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COMMUNITY TOGETHER WITH A FEW TRUSTEES WERE SENT OFF TO THE RABBI AND IN A WARM AND CORDIAL MANNER THEY NOTIFIED HIM OF THE DECISION OF THE JEWS OF STROPKOV. IN RETURN THE RABBI THANKED THEM PROFUSELY IN HIS OWN FASHION AND ADDED PERSONAL BLESSINGS TO THE JEWS OF STROPKOV. THE DAY THE RABBI ARRIVED A HUGE CROWD WELCOMED HIM WITH SONG AND GREETINGS AS THEY ALL ENTERED THE BEIS MEDRISH. ALL THOSE PRESENT WERE IN EXTREMELY HIGH SPIRITS, BLESSING EACH OTHER AS BEFITS SUCH A FESTIVE OCCASION.

LIFE WENT ON NORMALLY IN STROPKOV, EACH ONE BUSY IN HIS OWN FASHION. ACTUALLY THOUGH, THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HUNGARY WAS IN FEAR OF WAR. THIS WAS A PERIOD WHEN HUNGARY WANTED TO BE FREED OF AUSTRIAN RULE AND BE INDEPENDANT. WITH THE HELP OF G-D IT ALL PASSED WITHOUT ANY SERIOUS INCIDENTS BECAUSE AUSTRIA MADE A COMPROMISE WITH HUNGARY WHICH RESULTED IN A PEACEFUL OUTCOME. JEWS SIGHED WITH RELIEF AS ONLY DURING PERIODS OF PEACE ARE JEWS ABLE TO CARRY ON WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES. THIS IS WHY JEWS CONSTANTLY PRAY FOR PEACE.

WE ARE TOLD IN THE WEEKLY PORTION OF VAYEISHEV FROM THE PENTATEUCH (CHUMASH) THAT OUR FOREFATHER JACOB FELT THAT BECAUSE OF ALL OF THE DIFFICULTIES

HE ENCOUNTERED IN HIS LIFETIME UNTIL THE PRESENT, HE WILL TRY TO LEAD A QUIETER LIFE FROM NOW ON. PEACE IS A GOOD THING THAT EVERYONE STRIVES FOR BUT IT IS NOT EASY TO ATTAIN. WE HAVE TO ASK FOR THIS FROM THE ALMIGHTY, AND WITH SOME LUCK IT MIGHT BE BESTOWED UPON YOU.

THE JEWS OF STROPKOV LIVED THRU STORMY TIMES BUT BECAUSE THEIR SPIRITUAL LIFE WAS REWARDING, THEY HAD NOTHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT. THEY ENJOYED THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING DISTINGUISHED AND PROMINENT RABBS WHO BROUGHT FAME TO STROPKOV, AS WELL AS A WORDLY REPUTATION. AND NOW, WITH RABBI MOSHE JOSEPH TEITELBAUM THE WELL KNOWN GAON AND SAINTLY TSADDIK THEY RIGHTFULLY HOPED TO ENJOY SPIRITUAL PLEASURE FROM THE RABBI AND THE RESPECTED DAYANIM (RABBINICAL JUDGES). ONLY FATE MEANT IT TO BE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT THEY EXPECTED. WHAT HAPPENED? FOR A LONG TIME IT WAS RATHER CALM AND QUIET WITH JEWS BUSY ALL WEEK WORKING IN THEIR BUSINESSES AND ON SATURDAYS ATTENDING SERVICES IN THE SYNAGOGUE AND STUDYING IN THE BEIS MEDRISH AS WELL AS READING PSALMS AS WAS THEIR CUSTOM. HERE AND THERE THOUGH, PEOPLE WERE SEEN GOSSIPING OR TELLING SECRETS. AND WHAT WERE THESE SECRETS ABOUT? THE RABBI HINTED THAT HE WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE BEHAVIOR

OF THE DAYAN REB YITSCHAK HERSH. THE JEWS DID NOT AT ALL UNDERSTAND WHAT HE MEANT BY THIS. THE HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY ALSO DID NOT WANT PEOPLE TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER, SO HE DIDN'T DISCLOSE WHAT THE RABBI HAD HINTED. BUT JEWS WERE ANXIOUS TO KNOW SO THEY WOULD ASK EACH OTHER, THOUGH NO ONE COULD ANSWER AS REGARDS THE MEANING BEHIND THE RABBI'S CLAIMS. THE RABBI STOOD FAST IN HIS ACCUSATIONS AND WAS QUITE AGGREGATED OVER THE MATTER.

HIS CLOSE FRIENDS, THOUGH THEY THEMSELVES COULD NOT FIND FAULT WITH THE DAYAN WERE NEVER THE LESS DISTURBED TO SEE THEIR RABBI SO AGGREGATED. LITTLE BY LITTLE THE ARGUMENT FLARED UP. THE FRIENDS OF THE RABBI BECAME DISTANT FROM THE FRIENDS OF REB YITSCHAK HERSH BECAUSE THOSE CLOSE TO THE DAYAN COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE HIS FEELINGS HURT SO BY ALL OF THIS. IT FINALLY REACHED THE STAGE WHERE THE RABBI FORBODE HIS PEOPLE TO EAT IN THE HOMES OF SUPPORTERS OF REB YITSCHAK HERSH BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT CONSIDERED KOSHER.

MY FATHER TOLD ME THAT I WAS BORN THAT SAME WEEK AND ACCORDING TO CUSTOM, A SHOLOM ZOCHER (CEREMONY GREETING THE NEW MALE) WAS ARRANGED FOR FRIDAY EVENING FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. THE UNCLE REB MOISHE WEINSTEIN, MY GRANDFATHER'S BROTHER CAME TO WISH MAZEL TOV BUT DID NOT TASTE ANYTHING BECAUSE HE WAS A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE

RABBI AND DID NOT WANT TO TRANS GRESS THAT WHICH THE RABBI FORBODE.

THAT SAME WEEK THE HEAD OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY INVITED RABBIS FROM SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES AND AT A DIN TORAH (RABBINICAL COURT SESSION) A PEACEFUL DECISION WAS REACHED, THANK G-D. AT THE CEREMONY OF MY BAISS MILAH THE RABBI AND REB YITSCHAK HERSH SAT SIDE BY SIDE AND THERE WAS COMPLETE PEACE ONCE AGAIN. SOME TIME LATER AFTER THE INCIDENT THE RABBI LEFT FOR ITEL WHERE HE ASSUMED THE POSITION OF RABBI.

THE JEWS OF STROPKOV THOUGH SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE CONTROVERSY, WITH ALL ENDING WELL, WOULD HAVE PREFERRED FOR THE RABBI TO REMAIN IN STROPKOV. WHEN HE LEFT FOR ITEL THEY ~~DID~~ HAD SUCH PAINFUL MIXED FEELINGS AND THEIR CONSCIENCE BOTHERED THEM. THEY KEPT ASKING EACH OTHER HOW IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR ALL OF THIS TO HAPPEN. AFTER ALL BOTH THE RABBI AND THE DAYAN WERE GREAT TSADIKIM AS WELL AS SMART PEOPLE. VARIOUS POSSIBLE REASONS WERE GIVEN THOUGH THEY DID NOT SATISFY THE PEOPLE. I DO WANT TO RELATE HOWEVER ONE OPINION I HEARD FROM VARIOUS CHASSIDIM.

TWO JEWS FROM STROPKOV WENT TO SHINEVE FOR A SHABOS. THE RABBI ASKED THEM ABOUT CONDITIONS IN STROPKOV. THEY TOLD HIM ABOUT REB MOSHE JOSEF TETTELBAUM BECOMING THE PAW OF STROPKOV

ON, HE ASKED, AND I WASN'T EVEN CONSULTED? Suddenly there was a moment of silence after which he said, I thought that my Sholom would become the Rabbi of Stropkov, but now that you have someone else, you certainly won't have Sholom.

No one is of the opinion that the Rabbi said this with some hidden meaning behind it and that something was about to happen which did happen. But our sages taught us that when a Tsaddik predicts a curse, even unintentionally, it will come to pass.

Some time later, Rabbi Avraham Shalom, the son of the Shineveil Tsaddik was elected Rabbi of Stropkov. The Rabbi arrived accompanied by his son Mendele, a fine young man possessed of many many virtues. The public enjoyed them both. They had great respect for the Rabbi because of his saintliness and rare talent as a Baal Tefilla (one who excels in the leading of prayer). Reb Mendele was likewise a fine Baal Tefilla and a refined person. An air of contentment and joy permeated the Beis Medrish when Reb Mendele sat and studied.

The Rabbi Reb Sholom continued to be the Rabbi of Stropkov for the rest of his life, though there were periods when he spent some years in other cities. But he was always known as the Rabbi of Stropkov. When he

passed away his son Reb Mendele became the Rabbi of Stropkov with his passing on, the golden chain of Rabbinical presence ended and the community of Stropkov was destroyed. What a pitiful loss never to be forgotten.

A miracle by the Rabbi of Stropkov, Rabbi Sholom of Sacred Memory.

I have met a number of Jews who came from Europe after the war. When they heard that I was from Stropkov they asked me if I knew that Reb Sholom, the Rabbi of Stropkov was actually one who could perform miracles. I told them that during my lifetime, 60 years ago, this was already known, and I related to them some of the things that happened. I feel that it is important to write about this so that Jews will read and know.

Many years ago a young Gentile from Stropkov left for America. He was quite successful and after some time there he returned home looking like a rich Britz (Lord). He had a wife and young daughter. He bought a home and business on the main street. This did not ^{please} please the Jewish inhabitants as until now the shop keepers were all Jews. This young man built for himself a store with an adjoining inn very close to the home and inn of Reb Shlomo Henig. Reb Shlomo Henig immediately sensed the danger of the competition as he would lose his non Jewish clients,

A SERIOUS THREAT TO HIS LIVELIHOOD. REB SHLOMO HENIG WAS A GOOD PERSON AND AN HONEST JEW AND THE PEOPLE WERE WORRIED AND CONCERNED ABOUT HIM. SOMEHOW, REB SHLOMO HIMSELF DID NOT OUTWARDLY SHOW SIGNS OF FEAR OF WHAT WAS REALLY HAPPENING. THIS YOUNG FELLOW FINISHED BUILDING AND STOCKED HIS STORE WITH ALL SORTS OF BOTTLED HARD DRINKS. ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS HE WAS ONLY ALLOWED TO SELL BOTTLED DRINKS BUT NOT BY THE GLASS BECAUSE HIS BUSINESS WAS LOCATED TOO CLOSE TO AN INN WHERE DRINKS WERE SOLD BY THE GLASS. BUT THIS YOUNG MAN FOUND A SOLUTION (HE THOUGHT) BY FIXING UP A BACK ROOM WHERE PEOPLE SAT AND DRANK, WHICH WAS AGAINST THE LAW. MANY OF REB SHLOMO'S FORMER NON JEWISH CUSTOMERS STARTED TO PATRONIZE THE NEW INN AND HIS BUSINESS DEFINITELY SUFFERED. NEVERTHELESS, REB SHLOMO DID NOT SHOW SIGNS OF SADNESS OVER THIS AND PEOPLE COULD ^{NOT} UNDERSTAND HIS REACTION.

THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW COMPETITOR DID NOT LAST. THE JEWISH NEIGHBORS REPORTED THAT AFTER CLOSING HOURS THEY HEARD FIERCE ARGUMENTS AND INSULTS HURLED AT EACH OTHER. THE YOUNG MAN ACCUSED HIS WIFE OF FLIRTING WITH THE CUSTOMERS IN THE BACK ^{Room} AND EVEN SUSPECTED HER OF BECOMING OVERLY FRIENDLY. HIS WIFE'S BEHAVIOR AND THE WAY SHE CARRIED ON WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM SICK.

ONE BRIGHT SHABOS MORNING AS I LEFT MY HOUSE DRESSED

IN SHABOS CLOTHES STROLLING DOWN A FRESHLY SWEEP STREET I NOTICED A GROUP OF JEWISH NEIGHBORS RUSHING FROM THE YOUNG MAN'S HOME AMIDST A LOT OF EXCITEMENT. AS I APPROACHED CLOSER I SOON LEARNED THAT HIS WIFE SHOT AND KILLED HIM. PEOPLE STARTED TO GATHER BUT WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVED THEY WERE DISPERSED. THE BODY WAS REMOVED AND HIS WIFE WAS ARRESTED. ONLY THEN DID REB SHLOMO TELL THE SECRET THAT THE RABBI REB SHLOMO CONSOLED HIM AND PREDICTED SUCH AN OUTCOME, ASSURING HIM THAT IT WOULD END IN A TRAGEDY, AS IT DID. VERY FEW ACTUALLY HEARD OF THIS STORY AND THEY WILL BE SATISFIED TO READ ABOUT IT.

THE LAY LEADERSHIP OF STROPKOV

UNTIL NOW I WROTE ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL LEADERS OF STROPKOV, THE WORSHIP RABBI'S, THE DAYANIM AND OF THE DIGNITY THEY ADDED TO THE COMMUNITY. NOW I WANT TO WRITE ABOUT VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHO WERE PRIVILEGED TO HAVE SUCH FINE LEADERSHIP. I AM SURE THAT ANY JEW WHO KNEW SOMETHING ABOUT STROPKOV CERTAINLY HEARD ABOUT ITS FINE CITIZENRY.

ACCORDING TO WHAT OUR SAGES HAVE TAUGHT US ONE WHO MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR OTHERS TO SPEND THEIR TIME ^{THEN HIS LOVE OF THE TORAH} STUDYING TORAH IS ACTUALLY OF A HIGHER DEGREE THAN ONE WHO SITS AND STUDIES. IN THIS CONNECTION I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION THE NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HARRIED OFF THEIR

TALENTED DAUGHTERS TO BRIGHT YOUNG SCHOLARS WHOM THEY SUPPORTED AND SO ENABLED THEM TO SIT AND STUDY WITHOUT THE WORRY OF OUTSIDE INCOME. THESE JEWS WERE NOT JUST ORDINARY PEOPLE BUT RATHER CLEVER BUSINESSMEN. THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS WAS SO GREAT THAT THE STUDY OF TORAH WAS THE IDEAL WAY OF LIFE. THEY WERE WILLING TO SHARE WHATEVER THEY POSSESSED WITH A SCHOLARLY SON-IN-LAW.

THE FIRST OF THIS GROUP WAS THE MUCH BELOVED HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY REB HERSH FRIEDMAN, WHO WAS A PERSON OF MANY VIRTUES. HE WAS A WISE PERSON, VERY WEALTHY AND AN EXTREMELY HONEST JEW WHO GAVE CHARITY VERY FREELY. HIS SON-IN-LAW WAS THE GREAT TSADDIK REB YAAKOV YOSEF WHO HAD MANY FOLLOWERS IN HIS LATER YEARS AND WHO ENJOYED A WORLDWIDE REPUTATION. HIS FATHER-IN-LAW SUPPORTED HIM SO THAT HE WAS ABLE TO CONTINUE TO STUDY.

THE SECOND IN THIS CATEGORY WAS MY GREAT GREAT UNCLE REB YAAKOV HERSH GUTMAN. HE WAS A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN AND EXTREMELY CHARITABLE. HE HAD TWO TALENTED CHILDREN, A SON AND A DAUGHTER. HE MARRIED OFF HIS DAUGHTER TO REB MENACHEM ORENSTEIN, A GREAT SCHOLAR AND TSADDIK. REB MENACHEM AND REB YAAKOV YOSEF SAT ALL DAY WEARING TALLIS AND TEFILIN AS THEY STUDIED IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. LATE AFTERNOON THEY WOULD GO HOME TO EAT SOMETHING AND FOR MINCHAH THEY WERE BACK IN THE BEIS MEDRISH.

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THE THIRD PERSON WAS REB ZALMAN YOSOF WEINBERGER, A CLEVER DEALER IN LEATHER GOODS AND A FINE CITIZEN. HE DEVOTED MOST OF HIS SPARE TIME ^{TO} COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AND HE WAS PLEASED TO HAVE AS HIS SON-IN-LAW THE GAON REB YITZCHAK HERSH AMSEL. HE TOLD HIM NOT TO WORRY ABOUT EARNING A LIVELIHOOD BUT RATHER TO BE OCCUPIED STUDYING. THE FATHER-IN-LAW WAS HAPPY AND THANKED G-D FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING SUCH A SCHOLAR FOR A SON-IN-LAW. THIS MEANT MORE TO HIM THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

THE FOURTH OF THIS CATEGORY OF HONEST PEOPLE WAS REB YUDEL FRIEDMAN, A RESPECTED CITIZEN. HE WAS THE OWNER OF AN INN IN THE BEST LOCATION IN TOWN. HE HAD AN ARISTOCRATIC AIR ABOUT HIM AND WAS A GREAT CHASSID AND HONEST PERSON. HE HAD TWO SONS AND AN ONLY DAUGHTER. HE WAS LOOKING FOR A SON-IN-LAW, NOT JUST AN ORDINARY FELLOW, BUT ONE WHO IS A SCHOLAR. HE WAS VERY CHOOSY. G-D BLESSED HIM WITH A SON-IN-LAW WHOSE NAME WAS REB HERSHELE, A GREAT SCHOLAR WHO WAS ORDAINED BY LEADING GAONIM. HIS CREDENTIALS AND ORDINATION WERE OF THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE SORT. HE WAS JUST THE TYPE OF SON-IN-LAW REB YUDEL FRIEDMAN WAS LOOKING FOR.

REB HERSH REICH WAS A CHASSIDIC TYPE OF JEW, A QUIET PERSON OF GOOD HABITS AND ALSO CHARITABLE. HE WAS THE OWNER OF A SALOON AND WAS QUITE BUSY SERVING HIS

12. HE WANTED HIS TWO SONS TO BE LEARNED. THE YOUNGEST SON ASHER WAS VERY TALENTED AND AFTER HIS MARRIAGE HE MANAGED THE BUSINESS. REB HERSH ALSO HAD TWO DAUGHTERS AND BOTH MARRIED SCHOLARLY YOUNG MEN OF RESPECTED FAMILIES. ONE WAS MENASHE WHO SAT AND STUDIED. HE WAS NEVER SEEN WASTING TIME AWAY FROM HIS STUDIES. HE WAS ALSO AN HONEST JEW. THE SECOND SON-IN-LAW WAS YECHMEZKIYAHU GREENWALD, A HANDSOME, INTELLIGENT AND RELIGIOUS YOUNG MAN. HE CAME FROM A RABBINIC FAMILY AND CONDUCTED HIMSELF ACCORDINGLY. REB HERSH REICH SUPPORTED HIS SCHOLARLY SONS-IN-LAW.

REB MOISH REICH WAS A MAN OF HIGH CALIBRE AND A FINE CHASSID. HE WAS IN BUSINESS SELLING CLOTH FOR MEN'S AS WELL AS WOMEN'S CLOTHING. HIS STORE WAS WELL KEPT SIMILAR TO STORES IN LARGE CITIES. HE WAS A STRICT PERSON BUT WOULD NEVER HURT ANYONE. HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF IN A DIGNIFIED MANNER. HE WAS A LEARNED PERSON AND ALWAYS HAD A BOOK IN HIS HAND WHEN HE WAS NOT OCCUPIED IN HIS BUSINESS. HE WOULD SIT IN THE BEIS MEDRISH AND STUDY THE TALMUD. HE HAD A SON AND A DAUGHTER. THE SON WAS MARRIED AND DID NOT LIVE IN STROPKOV. THE DAUGHTER MARRIED A YOUNG MAN FROM RAYSHE, YITSCHAK HOIZMAN, WHO WAS KNOWN AS ITCHELLE, A CONGENIAL YOUNG MAN. HE SAT IN THE BEIS MEDRISH AND STUDIED FOR MANY YEARS. HIS IN-LAWS SUPPORTED HIM AND HE WAS A SOURCE OF GREAT PLEASURE

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REB HERSH LEIB WAS A DEALER IN WHEAT. THOUGH HE PRAYED ACCORDING TO THE ASHKENAZIC RITE IN THE SYNAGOGUE, HE ALSO WORE A SHYREIMEL AND TRADITIONAL GARBS ON SHABBOS. HE WAS NOT LEARNED BUT DEFINITELY HONEST AND UPRIGHT. HE HAD A ONE AND ONLY DAUGHTER, VERY TALENTED WHO MARRIED A YESHIVAH BOCHUR WHO CONTINUED TO STUDY AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE. THIS WAS A GREAT SOURCE OF NACHES TO REB HERSH LEIB AND HIS WIFE. THE YOUNG MAN WAS A TALENTED BAAL TEFILLAH WITH A VERY PLEASANT VOICE.

THE CHEVA SHAS - (TALMUD STUDY GROUP)
THE BEIS MEDRISH OF STROPKOV SPONSORED A ^{TALMUD} (TORAH) STUDY GROUP. THEY CONDUCTED DAILY CLASSES IN TALMUD BETWEEN THE MINCHA AND MAARIV SERVICES. THE GROUP CONSISTED MAINLY OF MEN OF THE OLDER GENERATION, REPRESENTING THE FINEST TYPE OF CHASSIDIC PRODUCTS. EACH ONE IN HIS OWN RIGHT WAS A SCHOLAR AND A DEVOTED CHASSID OF THE REBBE. THEY WERE MOSTLY PEOPLE WHO WERE OCCUPIED ALL DAY IN THEIR RESPECTIVE BUSINESSES. IT IS WORTHWHILE MENTIONING THEIR NAMES SO THAT THEIR GRANDSONS AND GREATGRANDSONS WILL KNOW WHAT KIND OF A GRANDFATHER THEY HAD SO THAT THEY WILL STRIVE TO EMULATE THEM.

REB NAFTALI GOLDMAN, OF BLESSED MEMORY WHOM I AM MENTIONING FIRST BECAUSE HE WAS A ROHEIN WAS IN CHARGE

OF THE MIKVE (RITUAL BATH HOUSE) FOR MANY YEARS. HE WAS A PROFOUND SCHOLAR. WHILE CONDUCTING THE STUDY GROUP HE OFTEN BECAME ANGRY WHEN SOMEONE WOULD MAKE REMARKS NOT TO HIS LIKING. NONE THE LESS PEOPLE RESPECTED HIM FOR HIS HONESTY AND FINE SCHOLARSHIP.

REB CHAYIM TSIMENT, OF BLESSED MEMORY WAS A VERY BUSY MAN DURING THE ENTIRE DAY. THOUGH HE WAS THE OWNER OF TWO INNS, HE WAS FAR FROM BEING A RICH MAN. WHEN HE CONDUCTED THE STUDY GROUP HE WOULD SPEAK SLOWLY AND CLEARLY. HE WAS A PROFOUND SCHOLAR AND CLEVER BUSINESS MAN. IN TIME HE BECAME THE MECHUTAN (IN-LAW) OF THE RABBI REB YAAKOV YOSEF.

REB MOISHE BAUM, OF BLESSED MEMORY WAS A RESPECTABLE PERSONALITY. HE WAS ALREADY RETIRED FROM BUSINESS. HIS APPEARANCE AND BEARING COMMANDED RESPECT. HE WAS A MAN OF FEW WORDS AND WHEN HE DID SAY SOMETHING NO ONE ARGUED WITH HIM BECAUSE THEY RESPECTED HIM SO. HE HAD A STATELY APPEARANCE AND WHEN HE CONDUCTED THE (SHIUR) TALMUD STUDY HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF A ROSH YESHIVAH (DEAN OF A TALMUD ACADEMY). HE LIVED WITH HIS CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WHO WERE A CONSTANT SOURCE OF PLEASURE TO HIM.

REB SHLOMO HENIG OF BLESSED MEMORY WAS AN UNUSUAL TSADDIK. HE WAS BUSY RUNNING HIS INN AND ALSO WORKED IN THE FIELDS.

SUMMERTIME HE WOULD COME TO THE BEIS MEDRISH IN THE EVENING AFTER WORKING IN THE FIELD CUTTING GRASS TO FEED HIS COWS. HE ALSO ADDED A ROOM TO HIS HOUSE TO ACCOMMODATE ITINERANT TRAVELERS IN NEED OF A PLACE TO SLEEP, WHOM HE WOULD ALSO SERVE BREAKFAST TO IN THE MORNING. WHEN HE CONDUCTED THE TALMUD STUDY GROUP IT APPEARED AS THOUGH THIS MAN DID NOTHING ELSE BUT PREPARE HIS LECTURE. WHEN ASKED QUESTIONS DURING THE COURSE OF STUDY HE WOULD ANSWER WITHOUT TOO MUCH HESITATION. HE WAS ALSO A MAN OF GOOD DEEDS, ALWAYS READY TO DO A FAVOR AND HELP IN TIME OF NEED.

REB YEHUDAH LEIB DAITSCH, OF BLESSED MEMORY WAS A VERY PLEASANT PERSON, ALWAYS WITH A SMILE. HE WAS THE PURIM RABBI ^(IMPERSONATING) OF THE TOWN FOR MANY YEARS. WHEN HE DELIVERED HIS PURIM DISSERTATION TO THE AUDIENCE HE APPEARED CALM AND CONVINCING. HE WAS A BELOVED PERSON. IN HIS LATER YEARS HE AND HIS FAMILY LEFT FOR ERETZ YISROEL.

THERE WERE OTHERS OF THIS SAME TYPE WHO ATTENDED THE TALMUD CLASS, UNFORTUNATELY I CANNOT RECALL THEIR NAMES. WHEN I THINK BACK ABOUT THIS BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF PEOPLE SITTING AROUND LONG TABLES STUDYING, I SEE BEFORE ME THIS GROUP OF RESPECTED JEWS

SPREADING LIGHT AND GOOD WILL. I CANNOT REMEMBER
HAVING SEEN THIS ANYWHERE ELSE.

THERE WERE MANY ^{JEWISH} MERCHANTS IN STROPKOV, BOTH SMALL
AND BIG AND THEY WERE BUSY PEOPLE. THEY WERE SCHOLARLY
AND HONEST PEOPLE WHO UTILIZED THEIR SPARE TIME FOR
STUDY. FOR INSTANCE, REB EVER GROSSMAN, THE BIGGEST MERCHANT
IN THE AREA WHO WAS A VERY BUSY PERSON. HE WAS QUITE
OCCUPIED WITH SERIOUS BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS, INVOLVING
MANY ^{GENTLE} PEOPLE, BUT AS SOON AS HE FINISHED HE WOULD SIT
DOWN TO STUDY.

REB EVER WAS ALSO A MAN OF GOOD DEEDS. HE WOULD NEVER
REFUSE TO DO A PERSON A FAVOR. HIS ^{ONLY} SON YECHIEL WAS ALSO A
GOOD NATURED SOUL. AS A YOUNG CHILD HE WOULD ALWAYS
DO FAVORS FOR POOR CHILDREN. WHEN HE WAS SOMEWHAT OLDER
HE WOULD ALSO LOOK TO DO SOMEONE A FAVOR AND SHARE
WITH OTHERS WHENEVER ASKED TO DO SO. AFTER HIS MARRIAGE
HE MOVED TO REISHE, AND ALSO THERE HE EXTENDED A
HELPING HAND TO THE NEEDY. THE JEWS OF REISHE HAD
NOTHING BUT PRAISE FOR HIM. HE WAS PRIVILEGGED TO HAVE
CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WHO LIVE IN AMERICA AND
ARE SUCCESSFUL MERCHANTS AND VERY CHARITABLE PEOPLE.

REB EVER GROSSMAN HAD A NEIGHBOR BY THE NAME OF REB
HERSH TUCHMAN. HE WAS THE SON OF A RABBI FROM A NEIGHBORING
TOWN. HE WAS A WATCHMAKER BY TRADE. HE WAS AN INTELLIGENT

JEW WHOSE MOTTO WAS "SILENCE IS GOLDEN". HE WAS ALSO
A HUMBLE TYPE OF CHASSID. HE WOULD OFTEN BE SEEN
SITTING AND STUDYING TALMUD IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. HE
HAD A LOVELY FAMILY WHICH CONSISTED OF THREE DAUGHTERS
AND TWO SONS WHO WERE ALSO QUIET AND RESPECTABLE
PEOPLE. HIS WIFE WAS A SAINTLY PERSON AS WELL.

REB MICHEL HENDLER, OF BLESSED MEMORY WAS A MERCHANT
AND WAS CONSIDERED TO BE WEALTHY BECAUSE HE WAS INVOLVED
IN BIG BUSINESS. HE WAS CONSIDERED A FINE CITIZEN WHOSE
CONDUCT WAS ALWAYS UPRIGHT. HE WAS KNOWN IN THE
COMMUNITY AS A SCHOLAR. HE HAD THREE TALENTED
SONS AND ALSO THEY WERE LEARNED.

REB ASHER FRIEDMAN, KNOWN AS REB ASHER FALIS
WHO WAS OF THE OLDER GENERATION WAS ALSO CONSIDERED
TO BE A FINE HONEST JEW. HE HAD VERY TALENTED SONS.
THE OLDEST, REB YOEL SHUCHET WAS A FINE BAAL TEFILLA.
WHEN HE WOULD SING A MELODY ACCOMPANIED BY HIS
BROTHER NAFTALI AND HIS SON HERSH LAIZER IT WAS
SOMETHING WORTH LISTENING TO AND THE AUDIENCE
ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH. IN ADDITION TO BEING FINE SINGERS
THEY WERE ALSO BRIGHT AND SCHOLARLY PEOPLE.

REB YOEL FRIEDMAN, THE HEAD OF THE JEWISH
COMMUNITY WAS THE SON OF THE WELL KNOWN AND BELOVED
REB HERSH FRIEDMAN, WHO OCCUPIED A SIMILAR POSITION.

REB YOEL, JUST LIKE HIS FATHER, POSSESSED A MAGNETIC PERSONALITY. HIS MANNER AND BEARING WERE MAJESTIC. HE WAS A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MAN AND A RESPECTED CITIZEN. HIS HOME WAS A MEETING PLACE FOR SCHOLARS AS HE HIMSELF WAS A SCHOLARLY CHASSID AS WELL AS AN HONEST AND RESPECTABLE PERSON.

REB CHAYIM YOSSEF FRIEDMAN AND REB ANARON FRIEDMAN, THE BROTHERS OF THE COMMUNITY HEAD WERE ALSO FINE CHASSIDIC JEWS. THEY WERE BUSINESS PEOPLE AND CONDUCTED THEIR LIVES IN AN HONEST AND RELIGIOUS FASHION. THEY ALSO SPENT MANY HOURS STUDYING IN THE BEIS MEDRISH.

REB ELIEZER HASSENFELD, THE SON-IN-LAW OF REB HERSH FRIEDMAN WAS A FINE CHASSIDIC JEW. HE WAS IN THE FURNITURE BUSINESS AND CONSIDERED TO BE A SMART PERSON. HIS MANNER WAS THAT OF AN ARISTOCRAT. HIS WELL TAILORED AND SMART CLOTHES ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION. HE WAS ALSO OFTEN SEEN STUDYING IN THE BEIS MEDRISH.

REB CHAYIM YOSSEF GUTMAN, THE SON OF REB YAAKOV HERSH WAS A TALENTED AND FINE PERSONALITY. HE WAS A DEALER IN WINES, QUITE SUCCESSFUL AND HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF LIKE A MAN OF WEALTH. IN TIME HE BECAME THE HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY. HE WAS CONSIDERED AS ONE OF THE SMART JEWS IN TOWN. HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF IN A CHASSIDIC MANNER AND STUDIED WHENEVER HE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

REB ELIEZER FRIEDMAN, THE SON OF REB YEHUDAH FRIEDMAN WAS A PERSONABLE AND INTERESTING INDIVIDUAL. HE HAD A VERY WEALTHY FATHER-IN-LAW. HE WAS THE OWNER OF A TALL BUILDING IN THE COMMUNITY WHICH INCLUDED THE FINEST HOME IN TOWN FROM WHICH HE HAD A HANDSOME INCOME FROM RENTS. HE WAS NOT OCCUPIED AS A RULE AND THUS ALWAYS OF CALM DISPOSITION. WHEN ONE MET HIM, HE ALWAYS HAD A GOOD WORD TO SAY. G-D BLESSED HIM WITH MANY VIRTUES SUCH AS, LEARNING, INTELLIGENCE AND GOOD LUCK. HE TOO WOULD OFTEN BE SEEN IN THE BEIS MEDRISH STUDYING. IN TIME HE BECAME HEAD OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

REB YOEL FRIEDMAN, OF THE FRIEDMAN FAMILY ALSO CONDUCTED HIMSELF IN A RESPECTABLE MANNER. HE ALSO OPERATED A SIZEABLE BUSINESS AND WAS CONSIDERED TO BE A WEALTHY MAN. HE WAS CALLED THE IRON YOEL BECAUSE HE WAS IN THE IRON BUSINESS. HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF IN AN ARISTOCRATIC FASHION. HIS SHABBS CLOTHES WERE OF THE FINEST AVAILABLE. HE ALWAYS GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF BEING A WELL-TO-DO CHASSID. HE ALSO HAD A FINE AND TALENTED SON-IN-LAW BY THE NAME OF CHANANYA, A YOUNG MAN POSSESSED OF MANY QUALITIES. HE WAS CONSIDERED A BRIGHT YOUNG MAN WITH TALENT AS A FINE BAAL TEFILLA AND ALSO A GOOD SINGER.

REB DAVID HASSENFELD, THE SON-IN-LAW OF REB MOSHE BAUM WAS A CHASSIDIC TYPE OF JEW AND ALSO A VERY HANDSOME

PERSON. HE WAS A BUSINESS MAN AS WELL AS INTELLIGENT AND WORDLY. HE WAS ALWAYS WELL GROOMED, WELL DRESSED AND HIGHLY RESPECTED BY EVERYONE. HE HAD VERY TALENTED CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY HIS SON WHO WAS AN UNUSUALLY HANDSOME AND TALENTED YOUNG MAN. HIS NAME WAS YESHAYE HERTZ. REB DOVIA AND HIS SON WERE BOTH LEARNED AND SCHOLARLY PEOPLE.

REB AVRAHAM ABBA MEIER HAD A BUSINESS OF FOOD PRODUCTS AND HE ALSO SOLD WHEAT. HE WAS AN ENERGETIC PERSON AND HAD A FINE FAMILY. REB AVRAHAM ABBA WAS SHORT IN STATURE BUT WELL BUILT. HE WAS KNOWN FOR HIS LEARNING, GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR AND MANY OTHER VIRTUES. HE WAS ALWAYS THE CENTER OF ATTRACTION WHENEVER PEOPLE WOULD GATHER IN A CIRCLE TO LISTEN AND ENJOY HIS WIT. HE WAS A CHASSIDIC JEW WHO SAT AND STUDIED IN THE BEIS MEDRISH BETWEEN MINCH AND MAARIV SERVICES.

REB YAAKOV ZISKIND THE BROTHER-IN-LAW OF REB YITZCHAK HERSH AND THE SECOND SON-IN-LAW OF REB ZALMON YOSEF WAS AN UNUSUALLY INTERESTING AND TALENTED FELLOW. HIS APPEARANCE WAS THAT OF A FINE LEARNED ^{CHASSIDIC} JEW. HE WAS ALSO KNOWLEDGEABLE AND ACQUAINTED WITH VARIOUS BUSINESSES, SUCH AS LEATHER, DRY GOODS, SILVERWARE, DIAMONDS ETC. IN ADDITION TO ALL OF THIS HE WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE

LOCAL BANK. IN HIS SPEECH ONE SENSED THAT HE WAS WISE AND WORDLY. HE WAS A BRIGHT SCHOLAR AND ALSO HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL IN HIS BUSINESS VENTURES.

REB AHARON BERGMAN WAS ALSO A CHASSIDIC JEW WHO WAS OCCUPIED IN HIS CLOTH BUSINESS. HIS CUSTOMERS CONSISTED MOSTLY OF WOMEN FROM THE VILLAGES WHO BOUGHT CHEAP CLOTH. HE WAS A LEARNED MAN AND ALWAYS HAD A WARM AND FRIENDLY EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE. HE WAS WELL LIKED BECAUSE HE WAS A MAN OF MANY VIRTUES COMBINED, SUCH AS LEARNING AND INTELLIGENCE.

REB BERISH WEINBERGER WAS IN THE LUMBER BUSINESS AND ALSO FAMILIAR WITH BUILDING MATERIALS. HE WAS ALWAYS INVOLVED AS A PARTNER WITH OTHER MEN IN THE SAME BUSINESS WHENEVER IT INVOLVED BUILDING. HE WAS WELL LEARNED TO AN ADVANCED DEGREE. HE WAS VERY CLEVER AND HIS PARTNERS COULD NEVER PUT ANYTHING OVER ON HIM. HE WAS KNOWN AS BERISH THE RED-HEAD. HE WAS AN HONEST CHASSIDIC JEW AND WOULD OFTEN REMAIN IN THE BEIS MEDRISH AFTER THE MAARIV SERVICE TO STUDY.

THE SON-IN-LAW OF REB BERISH WEINBERGER WAS SUPPORTED BY HIS IN-LAW FOR A FEW YEARS. HE WOULD SIT AND STUDY IN THE BEIS MEDRISH ALL DAY CURLING HIS

PAYES (SIDE CURLS). HE WAS A FINE SCHOLAR AND EVEN WHEN HE BECAME A DEALER IN LUMBER INVOLVED IN ALL SORTS OF BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS HE CONTINUED CURLING HIS SIDE CURLS.

REB SHAMUEL SHINEVER WAS A GOOD PERSON FROM EVERY STANDPOINT BUT HE HAD A HABIT OF SHOWING HIS TEMPER EVEN IN CARRYING ON A CONVERSATION. TO AN OUTSIDER THIS GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS HAVING AN ARGUMENT. VERY OFTEN WHEN REB SHAMUEL SHINEVER WAS RELATING SOMETHING TO A FRIEND, PASSERS-BY WOULD STOP TO ASK WHAT THE ARGUMENT WAS ALL ABOUT ONLY TO BE TOLD THAT THIS WAS HIS WAY OF TALKING AND THAT THERE WAS NO ARGUMENT AT ALL. HIS SON-IN-LAW REB BERISREL WAS A QUIET TYPE OF PERSON. HE SPOKE IN A QUIET REFINED TONE. EVEN WHEN HE SAT AND STUDIED IN THE BEIS MEDRISH HE WOULD HUM A TUNE ^{AS} QUIET AS A DOVE.

REB EFRAYIM HERSH WIDEMAN AND ALSO HIS FATHER REB MEIR WERE NOT WEALTHY PEOPLE BUT THEY WERE CERTAINLY UPRIGHT HONEST CHASSIDIC JEWS. ONE COULD TELL THEY WERE POOR BY THE SHABBES CLOTHES THEY WORE THAT WERE ~~FULL OF~~ ^{WITH} PATCHES. THEY WERE HUMBLE AND RESPECTFUL IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR FAMILY. THEY WOULD SIT AND STUDY WITH

ENTHUSIASM IN THE BEIS MEDRISH REB EFRAYIM HERSH WAS AN OUTSTANDING SCHOLAR.

THERE WERE ALSO MANY FINE HONEST JEWS IN STROPKOV WHO NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY IN THEIR YOUTH TO STUDY TALMUD SO THEY STUDIED WHATEVER THEY KNEW. THIS DID NOT IN ANY WAY DETERMINE HOW PEOPLE RELATED TO THEM FOR EVEN IF ONE WAS NOT LEARNED BUT SIMPLY SAID HIS DAILY PRAYERS AND READ PSALMS HE WAS NON-THE-LESS CONSIDERED AN HONEST PERSON. THERE WERE MANY WHO FITTED INTO THIS CATEGORY. I SHALL ATTEMPT, TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY AND TO THE EXTENT THAT MY MEMORY SERVES ME, TO LIST THEIR NAMES.

REB MOISH WEINSTEIN, WHO WAS KNOWN AS MOISHE REB ISAAC'S. HE WAS A KOHEIN AND AS SUCH WAS ALWAYS THE FIRST TO BE CALLED TO THE TORAH. HE WAS A MERCHANT AND DEALT WITH WHATEVER CAME ALONG. SOMETIME HE MADE A PROFIT AND AT OTHER TIMES HE LOST. ONCE HE BOUGHT A WAGON LOAD OF MATCHES OF VARIOUS TYPES OF BANDS. IF HE HAD A BUYER, HE WOULD SELL EVEN FOR LITTLE PROFIT. IF THERE WEREN'T ANY BUYERS AND IT STARTED TO RAIN, WHICH RUINED HIS MERCHANDISE, HE WOULD OF COURSE LOSE MONEY. THIS WAS THE TYPE OF BUSINESS HE DID THOUGH HE WAS NOT A POOR MAN. HE WAS

ALSO NOT A LEARNED MAN BUT DEFINITELY A PIOUS AND HONEST JEW. HE WOULD RECITE PSALMS EVERYDAY BEFORE THE SERVICES AND ALSO AT HOME HE ENJOYED READING THE CHUMISH. HE WAS NOT THE TYPE WHO WOULD SIT AROUND DOING NOTHING. HE WOULD NOT DISCUSS SECULAR SUBJECTS ON SHABBES AND BEING VERY LIMITED IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HEBREW HE HARDLY DISCUSSED ANYTHING EVEN WITH HIS WIFE. DURING PRAYERS HE WOULD COVER HIS HEAD WITH THE TALIS SO AS NOT TO BE DISTRACTED. HE PRAYED WITH FERVOR AND EVERY BONE IN HIS BODY WOULD SPEAK. WHEN HE REACHED OLD AGE HE LEFT FOR ERETZ YISRAEL AND HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING BURIED THERE AFTER HIS DEATH.

REB PINCHAS BAUM WAS KNOWN TO BE A WEALTHY MAN WHO CONDUCTED HIS LIFE IN CHASSIDIC FASHION. HE WAS ALWAYS SEEN LOOKING INTO A BOOK AND STUDYING. HE ALSO HAD THE REPUTATION OF BEING A FINE CITIZEN, POSSESSED OF GOOD MORAL HABITS.

REB AVRAHAM GER WAS AN HONEST JEW. THOUGH HE RECITED HIS PRAYERS IN THE SYNAGOGUE IN THE ASHKENAZIC RITE HE NEVER-THE-LESS WORE A SHATREIMER AND LONG BLACK ^{COAT} ON SHABBES AND CONDUCTED HIMSELF AS A CHASSID. HE WAS OFTEN SEEN WITH A BOOK IN HIS HANDS STUDYING.

REB LEIBISH TREITEL WAS A FINE CHASSIDIC JEW WITH A STATELY APPEARANCE. HE SOLD CLOTHING MOSTLY TO A NON JEWISH CLIENTELE. HE WAS IN BUSINESS WITH HIS SONS WHO WERE CAPABLE YOUNG MEN. HE CONDUCTED HIS PERSONAL LIFE IN A VERY RESPECTABLE MANNER AND WAS A MAN OF GOOD HABITS. HE WAS ALWAYS SEEN LEAFING THROUGH A SEFER IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. GENERALLY SPEAKING HE WAS A SMART AND CONGENIAL TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL.

REB ASHER STERN WAS CALLED ^{ASHER} "MADIAR". HE WAS A QUIET TYPE OF PERSON BUT IN HIS BUSINESS THINGS WERE QUITE LIVELY. HE WAS A GRAIN DEALER AND ALSO THE OWNER OF A ^{VARIETY} BUSINESS. HIS WIFE WAS A WOMAN OF VALOR AND TOOK A GREAT INTEREST IN HIS BUSINESS. TWO GROWN SONS ALSO WORKED IN THE STORE AND THE BUSINESS GREW. REB ASHER CONDUCTED HIS LIFE IN CHASSIDIC FASHION AND HIS WIFE WAS A RIGHTEOUS AND CHARITABLE WOMAN.

POOR WOMEN WHO DID NOT HAVE ANY MONEY TO BUY FLOWER TO BAKE ARAID AND ALSO CHARLES FOR SHABBES WOULD COME TO REB ASHER'S STORE AND WOULD CONFIDE IN HIS WIFE THAT THEY HAD NO MONEY. SHE OF COURSE WOULD HELP THESE PEOPLE AND TELL THEM NOT TO WORRY AND THAT THEY CAN RETURN THE MONEY WHENEVER THEY HAVE IT.

AFTER THE TWO SONS MARRIED THEY OPENED A STORE IN THE TOWN OF UNGVAR WHERE THEY WERE VERY

SUCCESSFUL. THEY SOON BECAME KNOWN AS BEING VERY CHARITABLE AND PATRONS OF THE LOCAL RABBIS. THEIR FINE REPUTATION SPREAD NOT ONLY THROUGHOUT THE AREA BUT TO OTHER TOWNS AS WELL.

REB NOSSEN FEITEL, A VERY HONEST JEW, RECITED HIS PRAYERS IN THE SYNAGOGUE ACCORDING TO THE ASHKENAZIC RITE. BECAUSE HE WAS A YESHIVAH BOCHUR IN HIS YOUTH HE ENJOYED COMING TO THE BEIS MEDRISH ON SHABOS BEFORE THE MINCHIK SERVICE WHERE HE WOULD STUDY. HIS CHILDREN WERE TAUGHT BY CHASSIDIC TEACHERS AND THEY WERE VERY RELIGIOUS.

REB NAFTALI GERNART, HIS NEIGHBOR ATTENDED SERVICES IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF IN CHASSIDIC FASHION AND WORE A SHATREIMEL AND BLACK SATIN COAT ON SHABOS LIKE ALL OTHERS IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. HE WAS A QUIET, SINCERE CHASSIDIC JEW. HE WAS ALWAYS BUSY READING BOOKS ON CHASSIDIC THOUGHT. HE HAD ONE SON AND ONE DAUGHTER. SHE MARRIED A CHASSIDIC YOUNG MAN FROM RAYSHE FROM A FINE CHASSIDIC FAMILY AND SUPPORTED HIM FOR MANY YEARS. HIS GRANDCHILDREN WERE ALSO QUIET AND VERY BRIGHT. ONE GREW UP TO BE A SUCCESSFUL POET WHOSE BOOKS WERE HIGHLY PRAISED IN LITERARY CIRCLES. HIS SECOND GRANDSON WAS A RESPECTED JEW AND IF REB NAFTALI WERE

ALIVE TODAY HE WOULD ENJOY GREAT NACHES FROM THEM IN AMERICA.

I THINK IT WOULD BE A SIN TO OMIT AND NOT MENTION THE RESPECTED WIDOW MRS. FRUMET STERN. SHE WAS RESPECTED BY EVERYONE IN TOWN BECAUSE SHE WAS BRIGHT AND TALENTED, TRULY A WOMEN OF VALOR. SHE WAS THE HEAD OF A FINE FAMILY AND RAISED HER CHILDREN WITH DIGNITY. I BELIEVE SHE HAD TWO SONS, ONE BY THE NAME OF ANSHTEL WHO LIVED NEXT DOOR TO HER AND THEY WERE IN BUSINESS TOGETHER, AND ANOTHER SON WHO DID NOT LIVE IN STROPKOV. THEY WERE BOTH UPRIGHT HONEST JEWS.

HER GRANDSONS LIVE IN NEW YORK AND SOME ARE RESPECTED CHASSIDIC JEWS WHOSE CHILDREN STUDY IN YESHIVAS AND ARE QUITE SCHOLARLY.

THE HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY AT THAT TIME WAS REB AVROHAM CHAIM SCHEINFELD. HE WAS THE OWNER OF A TAVERN AND THINGS WENT WELL WITH HIM. HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF WITH RESPECT AND TOOK AN INTEREST IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS. HE WAS CONSIDERED A SMART PERSON AND TOWN OFFICIALS RESPECTED HIM AS WELL. HE WAS WELL LIKED BY EVERYONE AND HE WAS ALWAYS READY TO DO PEOPLE FAVORS WHEN EVER THE NEED AROSE. HIS ABILITY AND TALENT PROVED MOST HELPFUL TO THE COMMUNITY. WHEN THERE WAS A NEED TO REBUILD THE MIKVE AND THOSE RESPONSIBLE

FOR THE WORK RAN INTO DIFFICULTIES AND REFUSED TO CONTINUE. REB AVRAHAM CHAIM STEPPED IN AND UNDERTOOK TO CARRY ON WITH THE PROJECT WHICH HE DID WITH GREAT SUCCESS. PEOPLE COULDN'T GET OVER HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THUS HE WAS HIGHLY RESPECTED. HE WAS AN HONEST PERSON AND WELL LEARNED. HIS CHILDREN WERE A SOURCE OF GREAT PLEASURE TO HIM. HIS TWO SONS-IN-LAW WERE GOOD CHASSIDIC JEWS; ONE WAS CALLED SHLOMO BERLINER.

THE TEACHERS OF STROPKOV

THE TEACHERS OF STROPKOV WERE TRULY HONEST JEWS. THE FIRST MELAMED (TEACHER) WAS REB ASHER AND CHILDREN WERE BROUGHT TO HIM AT AN EARLY AGE. THREE YEARS LATER THE CHILD WAS ABLE TO READ, STUDY CHUMASH AND HAD SOME KNOWLEDGE OF WRITING YIDDISH. THE SECOND TEACHER WAS CALLED REB SHLOIMELE MELAMED. HE TAUGHT HIS STUDENTS CHUMISH AND RASHI AND ALSO PROPHETS AND WRITINGS. REB SHLOIMELE WAS A VERY PIOUS JEW. HE WOULD STAND DURING THE RECITAL OF PRAYERS IN THE SYNAGOGUE AND PRAY ALoud IN A PLAINATIVE VOICE. HE TAUGHT HIS STUDENTS TO BE RELIGIOUS. HE SPENT MUCH TIME TEACHING HIS STUDENTS LESSONS ON MORALITY. AFTER TWO YEARS OF STUDY HIS STUDENTS WERE QUITE RELIGIOUS.

THE THIRD MELAMED WAS REB ZALMAN GOLDMAN. HE WAS A QUIET JEW AND AN ENERGETIC TEACHER WHO TAUGHT HIS STUDENTS TALMUD, CHUMISH AND RASHI.

HE EXPLAINED HIS LESSON PATIENTLY AND CLEARLY AND WOULD INCLUDE SOME COMMENTARY AS WELL. HIS STUDENTS STUDIED WITH HIM FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS AS WELL.

THE FOURTH MELAMED WAS REB YUDEL GOLDMAN WHO PREPARED THE BOYS FOR BAR MITZVA, THOUGH THE MAIN SUBJECT ^{OF STUDY} WAS TALMUD. BY THE END OF THE WEEK EACH STUDENT WAS REQUIRED TO KNOW THE LESSON IN TALMUD INCLUDING THE COMMENTARIES. THE RABBI WOULD GIVE THE LESSON OF TALMUD AND ALL WOULD SIT, LISTEN AND ABSORB. SOME DID NOT UNDERSTAND AND WOULD ASK QUESTIONS AND THE RABBI WOULD EXPLAIN. THERE WERE SOME WHO DID NOT UNDERSTAND TOO WELL AND DID NOT ASK ANY QUESTIONS.

REB YUDEL MELAMED'S STUDENTS STUDIED WITH HIM UNTIL THE AGE OF 15-16. SOME STAYED HOME AND CONTINUED WITH THEIR STUDIES WHILE OTHERS LEFT TO STUDY AT THE YESHIVAH. REB YUDEL WAS AN UPRIGHT JEW AND THE SHINEVER TSADIK BROUGHT HIM TO SHINEVER TO BE THE TEACHER OF HIS SONS. REB YUDEL MELAMED WAS AN ^{UNUSUALLY} OUTSTANDING PERSON. HIS FRIENDS THE TRUSTEES REB ASHER MELAMED AND REB YUDEL WEINSTEIN WERE ALSO HONEST JEWS WHO WORKED FOR VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS WITH THE NOBLEST OF INTENTIONS. REB YUDEL GOLDMAN WAS A MAN OF HIGH MORAL STANDARDS. HE SAT AND STUDIED WITH HIS STUDENTS THE ENTIRE DAY AND AS A RESULT HE WOULD BE VERY TIRED AND HAD TO REST HIS VOICE AS WELL. THIS WOULD NOT STOP HIM ^{THOUGH} FROM VISITING ANY STUDENT WHO WAS SICK. THE RAPPORT BETWEEN HIM AND HIS STUDENTS WAS COMMENDABLE AND

HE WAS LOVED BY ALL. DURING THE ENTIRE YEAR HIS MANNER AND CONDUCT IN THE BEIS MEDRISH WAS THAT OF A QUIET HUMBLE PERSON BUT WHEN PURIM CAME AROUND THINGS WERE DIFFERENT. HE WOULD ADD TO THE LEVITY OF THE EVENING BY SINGING JOYFULLY AND EXPOUNDING ON SECTIONS OF THE TORAH IN TRUE PURIM FASHION, WHICH BROUGHT ON CONTINUOUS LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE.

THE FIFTH TEACHER WAS REB MOSHE THE SHOCKETS, HE TOO WAS A TEACHER OF TALMUD AND PREPARED BOYS FOR BAR MITZVAH. HE SAT AND STUDIED DILIGENTLY AND PERSONALLY, WAS A QUIET, HONEST AND SCHOLARLY INDIVIDUAL. HIS STUDENTS ALSO STUDIED WITH HIM UNTIL THE AGE OF 15-16.

THERE WAS A TEACHER IN STROPKOV BY THE NAME OF REB BERISHEL MELAMED, THAT'S WHAT THEY CALLED HIM. HE WAS THE TEACHER OF BOYS AND GIRLS OF POOR WORKING PEOPLE. HE WAS A ^{FRIENDLY} LIKEABLE AND PLEASANT TYPE OF A FELLOW WHO WAS CONSIDERED TO BE A TRUE TSADDIK. IT WAS A PLEASURE TO BE IN HIS COMPANY.

THE TEACHER OF OLDER BOYS OF MARRIAGEABLE AGE WAS REB MOSHE SCHEINFELD. HE WAS THE THIRD DAYAN (JUDGE OF RABBINICAL COURT) AT RABBINICAL COURT SESSIONS AND WAS THE TEACHER OF BOYS OF WELL TO DO FAMILIES. HE WAS NOT ONLY THEIR TEACHER BUT ALSO THEIR FRIEND. HE WAS A GAON (GENIUS) IN LEARNING AND WELL ACQUAINTED IN WORDLY ISSUES. HIS STUDENTS SPENT TIME WITH HIM UNTIL THEY WERE MARRIED. THERE WAS ANOTHER TEACHER BY THE NAME OF REB YOSSE ROCHETS. HIS STUDENTS WERE THE SONS OF

MEMBERS OF THE SYNAGOGUE WHO PREFERRED TO STUDY THE CHUMOSH IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE AND ALSO TO WRITE IN GERMAN. HE WAS A VERY HONEST JEW AND KNEW GERMAN WELL.

THE SHAMOSIM (SEXTONS) OF STROPKOV

THE SHAMOSIM OF THE BEIS MEDRISH WERE EXTREMELY UPRIGHT PEOPLE WHO TOOK GREAT PRIDE IN THEIR WORK. ONE WAS CALLED REB AVRAHAM SHAMES AND THE OTHER WAS REB YAKOV SHAMES. REB AVRAHAM SHAMES WAS AN UNUSUAL PERSON WHOM EVERYONE ADMIRER. HIS INCOME WAS MEAGRE, NOT THE LESS HE RAISED A VERY FINE FAMILY AND NEVER COMPLAINED. REB YAKOV SHAMES ALSO HAD A SMALL INCOME BUT WAS A HAPPY TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL. HE WOULD ENTERTAIN AT SIMCHES AND BRING JOY TO OTHERS WITH HIS SINGING THOUGH HE HIMSELF GOT ALONG ON VERY LITTLE AND LIVED IN WANT. HIS SINGING AT THE TABLE OF REB ITZIK HERSH DURING HOLIDAYS WOULD BRING PLEASURE TO THOSE PRESENT. ⁴³ "H

IN PAST YEARS THE BEIS MEDRISH HAD A CHASSIDIC CHAZZAN BY THE NAME OF REB MENDEL HIRSH. WHEN WE SAW HIM LAST HE WAS ALREADY ADVANCED IN AGE AND EVERYONE RECOGNIZED HIS SAINTLINESS, HONESTY AND POLITE MANNER. HE ALWAYS HAD A SMILE AND PLEASANT EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE. ONE COULD ALSO DETECT THAT HE POSSESSED A FINE VOICE IN HIS YOUNGER YEARS. HE WAS A HANDSOME AND LIKEABLE JEW. HIS OLDEST SON WAS CHAZZAN AND SROCHET IN TREBISHOV AND HAD A LOVELY FAMILY. THE OTHER CHILDREN WERE

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SCATTERED IN OTHER TOWNS. IN OUR GENERATION THERE WAS NO NEED TO ENGAGE A CHAZZAN BECAUSE THE RABBI REB SHLOM DAVENED BEAUTIFULLY AND HIS SON HARAV REB MENDEL WAS AN EXCELLENT BAAL TEFILLAH. ALSO THE ELDERLY SHOCHET REB YISROEL LEIB, BECAUSE OF HIS TENURE CONTINUED TO CONDUCT SERVICES DURING THE HIGH HOLIDAYS. ANOTHER FIRST CLASS BAAL TEFILLAH WAS THE YOUNG SHOCHET REB YOEL. WHENEVER HE DAVENED ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SON YEHOSHUA LEIBER AND HIS BROTHER NAPTALI THE AUDIENCE WAS ALWAYS DELIGHTED. THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DAVENED WELL AND WERE GOOD SINGERS.

I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION A THIRD SHOCHET, REB MEIR. SHOCHET AN HONEST AND QUIET TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL WHO LIVED IN STROPKOV MOST OF HIS YEARS AND RAISED A FINE FAMILY. HIS CHILDREN LIVED IN OTHER COMMUNITIES.

THE FOLLOWING WERE THE MELAMDIM (TEACHERS) OF THE PAST GENERATION WHO TAUGHT OUR FATHERS. REB MOISHELE GUTMAN, KNOWN AS REB MOISHELE BOKSHER BECAUSE HE CAME FROM THE VILLAGE OF BOKSHI, AND WHO WAS A TEACHER OF TALMUD. REB SHIMON ETKIS AND REB SHIMON REB AVRAHAM'S WERE EXTREMELY STRAIGHT FORWARD AND FINE SCHOLARS. MANY INTERESTING STORIES WERE TOLD ABOUT THEM.

THE VARIOUS SOCIETIES

THE FOLLOWING WERE THE NAMES OF THE VARIOUS SOCIETIES OF STROPKOV: CHEVRA BICUR CHOLIM (SOCIETY FOR VISITING THE SICK) WAS HEADED FOR MANY YEARS BY THE TRUSTEES REB ASHER MELAMED, REB YUDEL WEINSTEIN AND REB YUDEL MELAMED. THESE THREE

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WOULD NOT ONLY VISIT THE SICK BUT WOULD HELP THE NEEDY WITH MONEY AND MEDICINE AND COUNSEL AS WELL. THOSE WHO WERE NOT IN FINANCIAL NEED WOULD BENEFIT FROM THEIR COUNSEL AS THESE WERE PEOPLE OF WIDE EXPERIENCE.

REB YUDEL WEINSTEIN AND REB YUDEL GOLDMAN WERE ALSO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CHEVRA TALMUD TORAH. THEY SAW TO IT THAT CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE ATTENDED HEBREW SCHOOL. IN CASES WHERE PARENTS COULD NOT AFFORD TO PAY THE TEACHERS, THEY WOULD RAISE THE MONEY.

ANOTHER SOCIETY WAS THE CHEVRA HACHNASAS KALAH, A GROUP THAT CARED FOR POOR BRIDES. THEY WOULD SOLICIT FUNDS, HELP WITH WEDDING PREPARATIONS AND ASSIST IN SETTING UP THE NEW HOME.

THERE WAS ALSO A GROUP KNOWN AS CHEVRA TIKUN SEFARIM WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IT WAS TO TAKE CARE OF THE THOUSANDS OF BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY OF THE BEIS MEDRISH OF STROPKOV. THIS ENTAILED KEEPING BOOKS IN GOOD CONDITION, PROPER LABELING AND CATALOGING. THIS WORK WAS DONE WITH THE HELP OF YOUNG BOYS, FROM POOR FAMILIES WHO WOULD BE PAID. THEIR RESPONSIBILITY WAS MAINLY PUTTING BOOKS BACK IN THEIR PROPER PLACES. FOR QUITE SOME TIME IT WAS MY RESPONSIBILITY AS WELL, TO SEE TO IT THAT BOOKS WERE ALWAYS IN GOOD CONDITION. I CONSIDERED THIS A GREAT MITZVAH AND SAW TO IT THAT BOOKS WERE ALWAYS KEPT IN ORDER.

THE WORSHIPPERS OF THE SYNAGOGUE

THE SYNAGOGUE IN STROPKOV USED THE ASHKENAZIC FORM OF WORSHIP. UPON ENTERING THE SYNAGOGUE ONE COULD NOT HELP BUT BEING IMPRESSED WITH THE EASTERN WALL. THOSE SITTING UP FRONT WERE PEOPLE OF MEANS WHO WERE ALWAYS WELL DRESSED IN MODERN GARB, DIFFERENT FROM THE CHASSIDIC CLOTHING WORN IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. A STRANGER WOULD GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE WERE GERMAN JEWS, BUT ACTUALLY THERE WERE PIOUS HONEST JEWS WHO SPOKE A REAL DOWNTOWN YIDDISH. THEY WERE OWNERS OF GOOD SIZE BUSINESSES OF ALL SORTS SIMILAR TO THOSE FOUND IN LARGER CITIES, SUCH AS FOOD PRODUCTS, GRAIN AND IRON WORKS. THE BUSINESS THAT WAS CARRIED ON WAS ALL OF A HIGH LEVEL. THE FIRST TO ESTABLISH THIS TYPE OF BUSINESS WAS REB NAFTALI SHITARK AND THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR RUNNING THE BUSINESS WAS HIS SON-IN-LAW HERR FRIEDMAN. THEIR HOME WAS ULTRA KOSHER BECAUSE THEY WERE OBSERVANT JEWS. THE SECOND SON-IN-LAW WAS A FELLOW NAMED WEINGERBERG. HE HAD A SIMILAR TYPE OF BUSINESS BUT ON A SMALLER SCALE. HIS APPEARANCE WAS LIKEWISE THAT OF A MODERN TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL. IT WAS SAID ABOUT HIM THAT HE AT ONE TIME ATTENDED A YESHIVA AND WAS SOMEWHAT LEARNED. HE ALSO GAVE HIS CHILDREN A GOOD JEWISH UPBRINGING.

REB BERTSHA KOLBERT ALSO HAD THE APPEARANCE OF A MODERN JEW. JUDGING FROM HIS CONDUCT AND MANNER, HE GAVE THE

APPEARANCE OF A REFINED TYPE OF JEW. HE WAS A DEALER IN SALT. HE SOLD SALT ON A WHOLESALE BASIS IN THE AREA AND ALSO TO GENTILES IN THE (AREA) VILLAGES. HIS BUSINESS DID NOT REQUIRE HIS DAILY ATTENTION THUS HE WAS ABLE TO DRESS DURING WEEK DAYS AS WELL LEADING A QUIET LIFE AS A STRICT OBSERVANT JEW.

REB CHAIM FRIEDMAN, A VERY FINE PERSON ALSO DRESSED WELL IN MODERN CLOTHES BECAUSE HIS BUSINESS DID NOT REQUIRE HIS DAILY ATTENTION. HIS WIFE BAKED CAKES AND COOKIES AND HER DAUGHTERS HELPED HER. HE TOOK CARE OF HIS CUSTOMERS AS THEY CAME ALONG BUT IT WAS NOT A VERY BUSY TYPE OF ENTERPRISE. HE WAS A FELLOW WHO ENJOYED TALKING TO PEOPLE ABOUT WORLD AFFAIRS. JUST THE SAME HE HAD A GOOD INCOME AND WAS ABLE TO DRESS HIS DAUGHTERS AND SONS IN FASHION. THEY WERE AMONG THE WELL DRESSED IN THE SYNAGOGUE. THE HOUSE WAS STRICTLY KOSHER. HIS ELDERLY FATHER REB YITSHAK YOSER HAD A BEARD AND SIDE CURLS AND WAS A TYPICAL CHASSID JEW.

REB WOLF SHAIN WAS THE OWNER OF A GOOD TOBACCO BUSINESS. THIS TYPE OF BUSINESS WAS GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED AND ALLOWED ONLY ONE ^{DEALER} TO OPERATE IN EACH AREA. HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF TOBACCO TO SMALLER DEALERS. HE MANAGED A SIZEABLE BUSINESS AND WOULD OFTEN TALK ABOUT STRICT RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES AND WAS EVEN READY TO FORGIVE SOME OF THEM. HIS WIFE WAS A SAINTLY SOUL WHO

SUPERVISED THE UPBRINGING OF THE CHILDREN WITH A STRICT EYE AND THE HOUSE WAS STRICTLY KOSHER. THE SHABBATH WAS OBSERVED TO THE MINUTEST DETAIL AND REB^{WOLF} WOULD BE CAREFUL WITH HIS REMARKS IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS WIFE BECAUSE HE DID^{NOT} WANT TO AGGREGATE HER. THE HOUSE WAS CONDUCTED IN ROYAL FASHION AND THE CHILDREN WERE RAISED ACCORDINGLY. THESE WERE THE JEWS WHO ADORNED THE EASTERN WALL OF THE SYNAGOGUE. THERE WERE ALSO SMALLER BUSINESS PEOPLE WHO DID NOT SIT UP FRONT WHO WERE RESPECTED JEWS AND SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR BUSINESS. THEY ALSO DRESSED IN MODERN GARB AND WERE ALL STRICT, OBSERVANT UPRIGHT JEWS.

A BAAL MELACHA

THE CRAFTSMEN - INCLUDING VARIOUS TRADES -

ALL OF THE CRAFTSMEN ATTENDED SERVICES IN THE SYNAGOGUE AND THEY WOULD DRESS IN MODERN GARB. THEY WERE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION RELIGIOUS JEWS. THOSE WITH LARGER FAMILIES WERE GENERALLY POOR BECAUSE A CRAFTSMAN'S INCOME WAS NOT LARGE. THEY WERE ALSO AS A RULE NOT VERY LEARNED. AFTER THEIR SHABES MEAL THESE JEWS WOULD COME TO THE SYNAGOGUE TO RECITE PSALMS. NOT ONLY WERE THE PARENTS OBSERVANT JEWS BUT THEY ALSO RAISED THEIR SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN THE SAME MANNER. THOSE WHO MIGRATED TO AMERICA CONTINUED IN SIMILAR FASHION AND AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE ESTABLISHED RESPECTABLE JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS.

REB MEIR SCHUSTER WAS IN AMERICA BUT AFTER A SHORT WHILE HE RETURNED HOME. WHEN I WAS GETTING READY TO GO TO AMERICA, I WENT TO SEE HIM TO ASK HOW JEWS LIVED THERE. HIS ANSWER WAS THAT JEWS WORK VERY HARD THERE AND THAT IT IS HARD TO BE A JEW. HE TOLD ME THAT IT WOULD BE A PITY FOR ME TO GO THERE BECAUSE I WOULD CEASE TO BE A RELIGIOUS YOUNG MAN. HE ALSO SAID "I WOULD RATHER EAT BREAD HERE THAN MEAT IN AMERICA". THIS WAS THE ANSWER OF A POOR SHOEMAKER FROM STROPKOV.

THE SYNAGOGUE ALWAYS HAD A CHAZZAN AND A CHOR. AND ONLY AN HONEST JEW COULD HOLD THIS POSITION. THE CHORISTERS CONSISTED LIKEWISE OF GOOD CHILDREN. ONE OF THE BEST CHORISTERS WHO SANG WITH THE CHAZZAN OF STROPKOV WAS REB YOSSEF ZALBER, A FINE CHASSIDIC JEW. OFTEN WHEN HE WOULD SING, MANY OF THE JEWS OF THE BEIS MEDRISH WOULD STAND NEAR THE WINDOWS TO LISTEN TO HIM. THE JEWS OF THE SYNAGOGUE WOULD OFTEN INVITE REB YITSHAK HERSH THE DAYAN TO DAVEN IN THE SCHULE AND DELIVER A SERMON, WHICH THE PEOPLE ALWAYS ENJOYED.

A FIRE IN STROPKOV

IN 1966 THE NEW YORK NEWSPAPERS REPORTED THE MURDER OF A YOUNG WOMAN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY ON A STREET HUMMING WITH PEOPLE. SHE CRIED FOR HELP BUT HER PLEAS WENT UNANSWERED AS NO ONE CAME TO HER ASSISTANCE. WHY SHOULD

THIS BE SO? THE ANSWER IS, NOBODY WANTS TO GET INVOLVED OR TAKE AN INTEREST IN THE SUFFERING OF OTHERS.

I WOULD LIKE AT THIS POINT TO CONVEY TO YOU SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED IN STRECKOV TO SHOW HOW MUCH PEOPLE DID CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER. EARLIER I MENTIONED THE FACT THAT I LIVED FOR A WHILE WITH MY GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDFATHER. MY GRANDFATHER WOULD BE AWAY ALL WEEK FOR BUSINESS REASONS AND RETURN ON FRIDAY. ONE SUMMER NIGHT WHEN MY GRANDFATHER WAS NOT AT HOME, MY BOBBE MAY SHE REST IN PEACE Woke ME UP WHEN SHE HEARD SOMEONE YELLING "FIRE". I WAS SENT TO FIND OUT WHERE THE FIRE WAS. WHEN I WENT OUTSIDE I SAW THAT SOME DISTANCE AWAY THERE WAS A HOUSE ON FIRE AND THAT IT WAS SPREADING TO NEARBY HOMES. WHEN I TOLD THIS TO MY BOBBE SHE DECIDED THAT WE HAD TO START PACKING OUR BELONGINGS AND CARRY THEM OUT INTO THE GARDEN AMONG THE TREES BECAUSE THE FIRE MAY SOON REACH OUR HOME. AS SOON AS SOMETHING WAS PACKED I TOOK IT OUTSIDE AMONG THE TREES AND I NOTICED THAT ALL OF THE NEIGHBORS WERE DOING THE SAME THING. I PACKED ALL OF MY GRANDFATHER'S PERSONAL BELONGINGS INCLUDING HIS SHIRAZIMEL AND LONG BLACK SATIN COAT. MY GRANDMOTHER WAS EQUALLY AS BUSY PACKING AND TOGETHER WE TOOK OUT AS MUCH AS WE COULD. WE FINALLY REACHED THE POINT WHERE WE COULDN'T CONTINUE BECAUSE WE WERE COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.

FROM THE CRIES OF OUR NEIGHBORS WE SOON UNDERSTOOD THAT THE FIRE HAD SPREAD AND THAT WE WERE UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING. BUT, LIKE AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN REB BERISHA MELAMED APPEARED AND OFFERED TO HELP. REB BERISHA SOON SAW WHAT HAD TO BE DONE AND STARTED TO CARRY THE REMAINDER OF OUR BELONGINGS OUT OF THE HOUSE TO BE PLACED BETWEEN THE TREES IN THE GARDEN. I AND MY BOBBE WENT OUTSIDE AND JUST SAT ON OUR BELONGINGS.

IN NO TIME THE FIRE SPREAD AND BURNED ALL OF THE HOUSES AND WE SAT ON OUR BELONGINGS ALL NIGHT OUTSIDE IN THE GARDEN. I REMEMBER ASKING MY BOBBE HOW LONG REB BERISHA MELAMED IS HERE TO HELP WHEN HE LIVES SO FAR AWAY, AND HOW COULD THIS WEAK OLD MAN CARRY OUT SO MUCH BY HIMSELF. HER ANSWER WAS THAT IT WAS NOT THE OLD MAN REB BERISHA BUT RATHER AN ANGEL.

THE FIRE WAS EVENTUALLY BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL AND THE FOLLOWING MORNING OUR NEIGHBORS WENT TO INSPECT THE DAMAGE. SOME OF THE HOMES WERE SALVAGED WHILE OUR HOUSE WAS TOTALLY DESTROYED BEYOND REPAIR.

BY MID-DAY OUR NEIGHBORS WERE BACK IN THEIR HOMES BUT MY BOBBE AND I WERE LEFT WITH OUR BELONGINGS WITH NO PLACE TO GO AND WONDERED WHAT NOW?

AND AGAIN LIKE AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN REB ZALMAN YOSSE THE DAYAN'S FATHER IN LAW APPEARED WITH A GENTILE WHO HAD

A HORSE AND WAGON AND TOOK US TO HIS SPACIOUS, WELL FURNISHED WEALTHY HOME. WE FELT AS THOUGH WE WERE IN THE KAISER'S PALACE AND WERE AFRAID TO STEP ON THE COSTLY CARPETS. THE SPINTRY WIFE OF REB ZALMAN YOSEF, MALKA GOTTLIB, PREPARED A MEAL FOR US AND WITH HER KIND WORDS MADE US FEEL GOOD AND WE REMAINED WITH THESE KING PEOPLE UNTIL AFTER SUKOS. A WEEK LATER WHEN MY GRANDFATHER SAW REB BERISH MEYER AND PRAISED HIM FOR HIS HELP, HE TOLD HIM THAT WHEN HE AND HIS NEIGHBORS NOTICED THAT THEIR OWN HOMES WERE NOT IN DANGER, THEY DECIDED TO HELP THE LESS FORTUNATE ONES WHEN IT LOOKED LIKE THE FIRE HAD SPREAD BEYOND THEIR CONTROL.

AN INTERESTING EPISODE

BEFORE CONCLUDING MY IMPRESSIONS OF JEWISH LIFE IN STROPKOV, I THINK IT IS WORTHWHILE TO DESCRIBE AN INCIDENT WHICH I WITNESSED AND TOOK PART IN.

I THINK THAT THE INCIDENT WILL GIVE US AN IDEA HOW HONEST PEOPLE WERE AND HOW MUCH THEIR DAILY DEEDS WERE GUIDED BY THE TORAH AND BY THE ADVICE OF ONE WHO IS LEARNED IN THE TORAH.

MALKA GOTTLIB, THE PRESENT WIFE OF REB ZALMAN YOSEF WEINGERFER HAD AN UNMARRIED DAUGHTER, RUCHAMA. DURING THE SUKOS HOLIDAY, ON THE FIRST NIGHT OF CHOL-HAMOD (INTERMEDIATE DAYS) WHEN WE LIVED IN REB

ZALMAN YOSEF'S HOUSE AND WERE EATING IN THE SUKKAH WITH THE TSADDIK REB YITSCAK HERSH THE DAYAN, MALKA GOTTLIB ENTERED TO ASK FOR SOME ADVICE. ALSO SEATED IN THE SUKKAH AT THE TIME WERE THE DAYAN'S FATHER-IN-LAW AND MY GRANDFATHER. IT SEEMS THAT TWO SHIDUCHIM (MARRIAGE MATCHES) WERE BEING PROPOSED FOR HER DAUGHTER, ONE TO A YOUNG MAN WHO WAS A STUDENT AND THE OTHER TO A BUSINESS MAN, BOTH FINE YOUNG MEN FROM GOOD FAMILIES. SHE WAS WILLING TO BE GUIDED BY THEIR ADVICE.

THE DAYAN REB YITSCAK ^{HERSH} SUGGESTED THE CASTING OF LOTS. I WAS SELECTED TO PICK FROM A HAT AND THE NAME OF THE SON OF REB LEIBISH TREITEL THE BUSINESS MAN WAS CHOSEN. SHE WAS CONGRATULATED WITH THE TRADITIONAL MAZEL-TOV AND THE NEWS SPREAD RAPIDLY. BY MORNING, ALL THOSE IN THE BETS MEDRISH HAD ALREADY HEARD ABOUT THE SHIDUCH AND PEOPLE WERE WISHING EACH OTHER MAZEL TOV. THE GOOD TIDINGS SEEMED TO HAVE SATISFIED EVERYONE.

THE HONEST PEOPLE OF THE PAST

APPROACHING THE FINAL ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORY OF JEWISH LIFE IN STROPKOV, I WOULD LIKE TO RELATE SOMETHING I WITNESSED DURING THE SUKOS HOLIDAYS WHEN WE SAT IN THE SUKKAH WITH THE TSADDIK, REB YITSCAK HERSH ANSEL, THE DAYAN OF STROPKOV. WE ALWAYS SAT IN THE SUKKAH WITH NEIGHBORS THIS WAS THE USUAL HAVING THE HONOR OF SITTING IN

THE SUKKAH WITH SUCH A GREAT TSADDIK, THIS WAS MOST UNUSUAL. DURING THE ENTIRE MEAL REB YITSCHAK HERSH SAT WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING. WE CERTAINLY HAD NO IDEA WHAT THIS GREAT TSADDIK WAS THINKING ABOUT BUT WE IMAGINED THAT HIS THOUGHTS WERE DIRECTED ONLY TO TORAH. HOWEVER BEFORE THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEAL HE RELATED A BRIEF ^{RABBINIC} ANECDOTE WHICH STARTED SOME CONVERSATION. HIS FATHER-IN-LAW REB ZALMAN YOSEF SAID A FEW WORDS AND MY ZAIDE REB YUDEL WEINSTEIN ALSO HAD SOMETHING TO SAY.

AFTER THE BENTCHEN (GRACE AFTER MEALS) EVERYONE LEFT THE SUKKAH EXCEPT REB YITSCHAK HERSH WHO REMAINED A SHORT WHILE AND WAS THE LAST TO LEAVE THE SUKKAH. I WANTED TO SEE WHAT HE DID AFTER EVERYONE LEFT. HE HAD TEARS IN HIS EYES WHICH HE COULDN'T CONTROL BUT STARTED TO WIPE THEM AS HE LEFT THE SUKKAH WITH WHICH HE HATED TO PART.

SH'MINI ATSERES (LAST DAY OF SUKKOS) WITH RABBI YITSCHAK HERSH AMSEL OF BLESSED MEMORY.

WE HAD A MINHAG (RELIGIOUS CUSTOM) THAT ON SH'MINI ATSERES WE RECITED THE ICIDUSH IN THE SUKKAH BUT ATE OUR MEAL IN THE HOUSE. AFTER THE MEAL WE WENT BACK TO PART WITH THE SUKKAH, EAT FRUITS AND SAY A SPECIAL PRAYER, THE YEHI ROTSON. I WAS ANXIOUS TO SEE HOW REB YITSCHAK HERSH PARTED WITH THE SUKKAH. WHEN HE REMAINED THERE ALONE, I NOTICED THAT WHILE HE

WAS SAYING THE YEHI ROTSON HE PROLONGED THE WORDS WITH DEEP FEELING AND WAS CRYING AS HE KISSED THE FOUR WALLS. UPON LEAVING THE SUKKAH HE WIPE THE TEARS FROM HIS FACE AND WENT INTO HIS HOUSE. THIS MADE AN IMPRESSION UPON ME WHICH I SHALL NEVER FORGET.

THERE ALSO EXISTED A MINHAG ON HOLY DAYS WHEN ALL OF HIS CHASSIDIM WOULD GATHER AROUND HIS TABLE AFTER THE MEAL AND REB YITSCHAK WOULD DELIVER A DISCOURSE ON THE TORAH. REB YAAKOV SHAMES WOULD LEAD IN THE SINGING AND THERE WAS ALSO PLENTY OF WINE ON HAND. IN BETWEEN THE SINGING AND DANCING THE REBBE WOULD EXPOUND HIS TORAH THOUGHTS.

THE ENTIRE AFTERNOON WAS SPENT IN LISTENING TO THE REBBE'S WORDS OF WISDOM, SINGING JOYFULLY, DRINKING WINE AND DANCING. JUST BEFORE THE HOUR OF MINCHAH THE REBBE CHANGED CLOTHES. THIS WAS A SIGN THAT THE AFTERNOON WAS OVER AND THAT IT WAS TIME TO GO TO THE SYNAGOGUE FOR EVENING PRAYERS AND SHINCHAS TORAH SERVICE.

REB YAAKOV SHAMES STARTED TO SING AND THE CONGREGATION JOINED IN AS REB YITSCHAK HERSH WENDED HIS WAY TO THE SYNAGOGUE FOLLOWED BY HIS CHASSIDIM. IT LOOKED AS THOUGH THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF THE SHATEL WAS MARCHING WITH MEN AND BOYS OF ALL AGES SINGING AND CIRCLING AROUND THE REBBE WITH SCROLLS OF THE LAW IN THEIR ARMS. UPON REACHING THE SYNAGOGUE ALL ENTERED QUIETLY AND TOOK THEIR SEATS. THOSE WHO NEVER WITNESSED THIS SIMCHE, HAVE NEVER SEEN

A REAL SIMONE. THIS IS HOW THE JEWS OF STROPKOV GAVE RESPECT TO THE TORAH AND TO THEIR LEADER, WHO WAS LEARNED IN THE TORAH.

IT SEEMS FITTING AT THIS POINT TO RELATE AN INCIDENT WHICH TEACHES AN IMPORTANT LESSON. THERE WAS A MAN IN STROPKOV NAMED REB ISAAC WHO WAS A VERY PIOUS AND HONEST JEW. FINANCIALLY HE WOULD BE CONSIDERED A POOR MAN BUT HE HAD THREE BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS AND G-D BLESSED HIM WITH THREE TALENTED SONS-IN-LAW. ONE WAS REB NAFTALI HERSH, WHO WAS THE SHAMES OF THE SCHULE. HE WAS A QUIET HONEST PERSON AND INTERESTED IN LITERATURE. HE WAS THE OWNER OF A RARE PAIR OF TEFILLIN, WRITTEN BY AN OUTSTANDING SCRIBE KNOWN THROUGHOUT HUNGARY AS THE EXPERT IN THIS FIELD. THE SECOND SON-IN-LAW WAS REB SHLOMO YOSSEF WEINGERBER, ALSO AN HONEST CHASSIDIC JEW AND A CLEVER MERCHANT WHO PROVIDED WELL FOR HIS FAMILY. G-D BLESSED HIM WITH A SON-IN-LAW WHOSE NAME ^{WAS} REB BORUCH GREENFELD WHO HAD A WONDERFUL REPUTATION AS AN OUTSTANDING SCHOLAR AND VERY TALENTED MUSICALLY. ONE WOULD ONLY HAVE TO TALK WITH HIM FOR A FEW MINUTES TO REALIZE THE VAST EXTENT OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE TORAH. THIS WAS ALSO TRUE OF HIS ABILITY AS A PAAL TEFILLA, FOR LISTENING TO HIS PLEASANT VOICE AND SWEET MELODIES WAS AN UNFORGETTABLE THRILL. THE THIRD SON-IN-LAW WAS REB MOISSE WEINSTEIN, AN HONEST AND PIOUS JEW. REB MOISSE WAS A MERCHANT DEALING IN VARIOUS TYPES OF MERCHANDISE AND SUPPORTED HIS FAMILY HONORABLY AND RESPECTFULLY.

HE HAD FOUR CHILDREN, TWO SONS AND TWO DAUGHTERS, EACH ONE BRIGHT AND TALENTED. THE TWO SONS AND ONE DAUGHTER MARRIED WELL. THE OTHER DAUGHTER WAS NOT SO EASY TO MARRY OFF. FOR SOME REASON A YOUNG RELIGIOUS FELLOW FROM A GALICIAN TOWN ARRIVED AND SHORTLY AFTERWARDS A MATCH WAS ARRANGED AND THE COUPLE WAS MARRIED. THE GROOM'S NAME WAS REB GETZEL FRIEDMAN. HE WAS VERY RELIGIOUS AND SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME, PRAYING, RECITING PSALMS AND STUDYING. HIS WIFE CHAVE SOON REALIZED THAT HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR A FAMILY SO SHE DECIDED TO GO INTO BUSINESS AND BECOME THE BREADWINNER OF THE FAMILY. IN TIME SHE HAD A FAMILY WHICH CONSISTED OF TWO SONS AND A DAUGHTER. HER HUSBAND NEVER THOUGHT OF NOT DISCUSSING WITH ANY ONE WHERE THE SUPPORT OF HIS FAMILY CAME FROM. HE CONTINUED WITH HIS LIFESTYLE WHICH CONSISTED OF, ^{THEN COMING HOME FOR MEALS,} STUDYING, PRAYING AND SAYING PSALMS. HIS WIFE SUPPORTED THE FAMILY AND BROUGHT UP THE CHILDREN IN A RESPECTABLE MANNER. IN TIME GETZEL BECAME KNOWN AS GETZEL THE BATLAN (NEVER DO WELL). DURING THE WAR YEARS THEY LIVED THROUGH THE TRAGIC EXPERIENCES WHICH MANY OTHERS WERE NOT ABLE TO ESCAPE.

THERE ARE TWO GRANDCHILDREN OF REB GETZEL AND CHAVE LIVING IN NEW YORK. ONE IS A YOUNG MAN, TALL AND WELL BUILT WHO IS A RABBI AND OCCUPIES THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL OF A (SMALL) YESHIVA. HE IS WELL RESPECTED BY THE PARENTS BECAUSE THEY FEEL FORTUNATE TO HAVE SUCH A CAPABLE PERSON LOOKING AFTER THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN. HIS SISTER LIKEWISE OCCUPIES AN IMPORTANT POSITION IN A JEWISH SCHOOL.

AND HER HUSBAND IS THE PRINCIPAL OF ANOTHER YESHIVAH. FROM ALL THIS IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT THE CREATOR OF THE WORLD KEEPS A WATCHFUL EYE ON US AND DIRECTS OUR DESTINIES.

IN THE YEAR 1903 AN UNPLEASANT INCIDENT OCCURRED IN STRAPKOV AND BECAUSE IT REALLY DID HAPPEN, I FEEL THAT IT SHOULD BE RECORDED AS PART OF THE HISTORY OF STRAPKOV.

THERE WAS A FAMILY IN STRAPKOV WHOSE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD WAS KNOWN AS REB CHAIM LEIB. I DO NOT REMEMBER THE FAMILY NAME AS THIS RARELY CAME UP IN CONVERSATION. THE FAMILY CONSISTED OF REB CHAIM LEIB AND HIS WIFE, A MARRIED DAUGHTER AND HER HUSBAND AND A YOUNG DAUGHTER. THEY WERE RATHER POOR PEOPLE AND AS FAR AS I CAN RECALL THEIR SUPPORT CAME FROM CHARITY. REB CHAIM LEIB WAS AN OLD MAN AND VERY SCHOLARLY. HE WOULD ATTEND THE SECOND MINYAN IN THE BEIS MEDRISH AND WOULD WEAR HIS TALIS AND TEFILLIN UNTIL NOON TIME. WHEN SOMEONE IN THE CONGREGATION OBSERVED YAHRTZEIT THEY WOULD USUALLY BRING SOME BRANDY AND CAKE. HE WOULD ALWAYS TAKE SOME AND PUT IT ASIDE ON A BOOK SHELF IN THE BEIS MEDRISH. AFTER FINISHING HIS PRAYERS HE WOULD SIT AND STUDY UNTIL NOON TIME, REMOVE HIS TALIS AND TEFILLIN AND THEN ENJOY THE LITTLE DRINK WITH THE CAKE.

ONE DAY I NOTICED THAT A YOUNGSTER WHO STUDIED TOGETHER WITH ME WAS PLANNING TO PUT ONE OVER ON THE OLD MAN. HE WATCHED CAREFULLY WHERE REB CHAIM LEIB PLACED HIS LITTLE TREAT AND WHEN HE WASN'T LOOKING HE REMOVED IT FROM THE BOOKSHELF AND PUT IT SOMEWHERE ELSE. WHEN REB CHAIM LEIB WAS READY TO ENJOY HIS DRINK OF BRANDY AND CAKE HE SOON FOUND THAT IT WASN'T IN ITS USUAL PLACE. I NOTICED HOW HE SIGHED AND LOOK AROUND IN DISSAPPOINTMENT TO SEE WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS BIT OF MISCHIEF. SURE ENOUGH HE NOTICED THAT THIS YOUNGSTER IS LAUGHING AND ENJOYING IT ALL. HE WENT AFTER HIM BUT OF COURSE THE YOUNGSTER WAS MUCH FASTER AND REB CHAIM LEIB BECAME EXHAUSTED TO THE POINT WHERE HE COLLAPSED ON A BENCH AND SOON PASSED OUT COMPLETELY.

WHEN THE CONGREGATION GATHERED FOR MINCHAH SERVICES THEY FOUND THAT REB CHAIM LEIB HAD PASSED AWAY. (WHY WAS I SILENT ALL OF THIS TIME) BECAUSE THE YOUNGSTER WAS MUCH STRONGER THAN ME AND I WAS ALREADY BEATEN UP BY HIM IN THE PAST. TRUTHFULLY, I WAS REALLY AFRAID OF HIM, AND DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. THE INCIDENT LEFT A PAINFUL IMPRESSION AND EVERYONE REMEMBERED WHAT HAPPENED.

IT ALL ENDED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER. THIS YOUNGSTER CAME TO AMERICA AS A YOUNG MAN AND CONDUCTED HIMSELF AS A JEW SHOULD. HE WAS SOON INTRODUCED TO A FINE YOUNG

LADY AND THEY WERE MARRIED. HE WAS SUCCESSFUL IN BUSINESS AND SOON BECAME A WEALTHY MAN. HE SAW TO IT THAT HIS CHILDREN RECEIVED A GOOD JEWISH EDUCATION AND THAT THEY WOULD CONDUCT THEIR LIVES ACCORDINGLY. HIS CHILDREN ALSO MARRIED WELL AND HIS SONS-IN-LAW WERE GOOD RELIGIOUS JEWS. AFTERWARDS HE LOST HIS BUSINESS AND HIS WEALTH DWINDLED. HIS HEALTH BEGAN TO FAIL AND HE SUFFERED WITH HIS LEGS. HIS CONDITION DETERIORATED TO THE POINT WHERE HE COULDN'T LEAVE HIS HOUSE FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS AND HE FINALLY PASSED AWAY. THIS WHOLE EPISODE LEFT AN UNGEARABLE IMPRESSION UPON ME BECAUSE I WITNESSED IT ALL AND MY CONSCIENCE BOTHERED ME.

I CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT IN ADDITION TO THE REGULAR STUDIES WE SHOULD ALSO TEACH OUR CHILDREN AHAVAS YISROEL (BROTHERLY LOVE) AS THIS IS WHAT IS NEEDED TO BE A GOOD PERSON AND A GOOD JEW. I AM REMINDED OF WHAT A JEW ONCE TOLD ME, THAT SHABSES IN THE BEIS MEDRISH HE SEES MANY FRIENDLY PEOPLE WHO GREET HIM WITH A GUT SHABSES, ON SATURDAY EVENING THEY GREET HIM AGAIN APPROPRIATELY BUT DURING THE WEEK THEY PASS HIS FRUIT AND VEGETABLES STORE BUT DO NOT PATRONIZE HIM. THOUGH HIS PRICES ARE THE SAME, THEY BUY FROM OTHERS. WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THIS? SOMETHING IS LACKING AND THAT IS AHAVAS YISROEL.

I WANT TO CONCLUDE WITH A WISE ADAGE WHICH I HEARD

FROM MY GOOD FRIEND RABBI SHLOM AUGERMAN, MAY HE BE BLESSED WITH A GOOD LONG LIFE. THIS WAS ORIGINALLY TOLD BY THE VENERABLE RABBI AND TSADDIK REB MENACHEM MENDELE HALGESHTAM, OF SAINTED MEMORY, THE LAST RABBI OF STROPKOV.

WHEN JEWS SAY "L'CHA HASHEM HATZEDAKAH" (UNTO THEE IS ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS) THEY PRAISE THE ALMIGHTY. THE RABBI INTERPRETS THIS AS FOLLOWS: WHEN RABBIS PRAY "L'CHA" THEY MEAN, YOU SHOULD TEACH THE JEWS THE MATTER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT DEPENDANT UPON THEIR BENEVOLENCE. BUT "V'LANU" (WE) WE RABBIS HAVE TO DEPEND UPON THEM FOR OUR LIVELIHOOD - "BOSHEH HAPANIM" - THUS WE ARE OFTEN DISAPPOINTED OR WE FACE SHAME.

THE YAHRTZEIT DATES OF THE RABBIS OF STROPKOV
RABBI MOSE SCHEINFELD OF BLESSED MEMORY, THE FIRST RABBI OF STROPKOV, PASSED AWAY IN THE CITY OF VRONOV
1826 - 1377 NO EXACT DATE GIVEN

RABBI YEKUSIEL YEHUDAH TEITELBAUM, OF BLESSED MEMORY THE SECOND RABBI - AUTHOR OF YITAV LEV, YITAV PANIM, RESPONSA, AVNEI TSEDEK PASSED AWAY 6TH DAY OF ELUL 1883, IN THE CITY OF MARMARUSH - SIGET

RABBI CHAIM YOSEF GOTTLICHER, OF BLESSED MEMORY, AUTHOR OF TIV GITIN UK'DUSHIN - PASSED AWAY THE 4TH OF ADAR 1867

RABBI YECHIEL SHAGE HALBERSHTAM, OF BLESSED MEMORY
AUTHOR OF: DIVREI Y'CHEZKEL, PASSED AWAY 6TH TEVES 1899

RABBI MOSHE TEITELBAUM, OF BLESSED MEMORY
PASSED AWAY 24TH OF TEVES 1897

RABBI AVRAHAM SHLOM HALBERSHTAM, OF BLESSED MEMORY
AUTHOR OF DIVRA SHALOM - PASSED AWAY OF THE FIRST
DAY OF SHEVUOS 1940

RABBI MENACHEM HALBERSHTAM, OF BLESSED MEMORY,
AUTHOR OF DIVREI MENACHEM. PASSED AWAY 6TH IYAR 1954
IN BROOKLYN.

RABBI YITZCHAK TZVI AMSEL, OF BLESSED MEMORY
PASSED AWAY 9TH SHVAT 1937

RABBI SHLOMO BORUCH TANNENBAUM, OF BLESSED MEMORY,
PASSED AWAY 5TH ADAR I, 1891.

